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172. The debate ended at 1.22 a.m. and Mr. Henry Brooke, the Home Secretary, went straight home. No one asked him to stay and he knew nothing of the events of the rest of the night.

(ii) Mr. and Mrs. Profumo Go Home

173. But the Chief Whip had meanwhile seen Mr. Profumo. Mr. Profumo had been to a dinner and looked into the House on his way home. He saw the Chief Whip, who told him of the accusations that had been made. The Chief Whip said to him, "I must ask you point blank, did you or didn't you?" He said, "I didn't". And the Chief Whip told him that he thought he might have to make a statement: but that he should go back and go to bed. So Mr. Profumo, with his wife, went back to bed. Their house was besieged by reporters, but they ran the siege and got in about 12.40 a.m., very wrought up, took sleeping pills, and went to bed.

(iii) A Personal Statement is Proposed

174. The Chief Whip meanwhile had been thinking more about the matter. It occurred to him that these statements in the House afforded an opportunity to bring the rumours to an end and that the right way to deal with them was for Mr. Profumo to make a personal statement in the House. He telephoned to the Prime Minister, who agreed. The actual sequence of events is difficult to disentangle but this is what took place. After the debate was over, about 1.30 a.m., the Chief Whip asked Mr. Macleod (who, as the Leader of the House, was naturally concerned in any personal statement) to come along to his room. Soon afterwards the Attorney-General came in. He took the view very strongly that this was the occasion which Mr. Profumo ought to take to deny the rumours. Mr. Profumo had been waiting for an opportunity to bring a libel action. But here was an opportunity to scotch them by a personal statement. Next the question arose as to when it should be made. It was agreed between them that it was undesirable to leave the rumours unanswered over the week-end (for the Sunday newspapers would have them without a denial). So it would have to be done in the morning, Friday morning. They all thought it was desirable to have first-hand information about what had been said. So they asked Mr. Deedes (the Minister without Portfolio) to come as he had been present in the Chamber and heard all that was said. He had gone home, but the Chief Whip telephoned him and asked him to come back. The Solicitor-General (who had gone to his room) came back too. So there were present all the Ministers who heard the statements made (except the Home Secretary), together with the Chief Whip and the Leader of the House, who had special responsibilities if a personal statement was to be made. It was not a pre-arranged meeting of the five Ministers. It just grew.

(iv) Mr. Profumo and his Solicitor are called to the House

175. It was, of course, plain that, if Mr. Profumo was to make a personal statement next morning, he had to be called back. This took a long time because he could not be got on the telephone and the Chief Whip sent his assistant with a car for him. Mr. and Mrs. Profumo were called about 2.45 a.m. (despite the sleeping pills). Mrs. Profumo described to me

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what happened: "We were so groggy. All he (the assistant) said was, 'Look, you have got to come back to the House,' and I remember Jack, groping his way round, saying 'I must have a clean shirt' and trying to push the cuff-links through." So he dressed and went down to the House.

176. The Attorney-General thought that Mr. Profumo's solicitor should be there too, and the Solicitor-General agreed. The reason was because the personal statement was to be used as the occasion for refuting the rumours, which otherwise would be done in a libel action. It was understood that Mr. Profumo had given instructions to issue writs and it was desirable that the personal statement should not contain anything to prejudice the litigation. Furthermore, the thought did occur to the Attorney-General that Mr. Profumo might have made some admissions to the solicitor under the cloak of legal professional privilege—and, if so, the presence of his solicitor would be a check to see that the personal statement was in full accord with what he had told his solicitor. A telephone message was therefore sent to Mr. Clogg and he went to the House too. He arrived some time before Mr. Profumo.

#### (v) The Statement is Drafted

177. When Mr. Profumo's solicitor arrived the meeting split up into two parts. The drafting was done by the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General and Mr. Profumo's solicitor in consultation in one room. The others, Mr. Macleod, Mr. Redmayne and Mr. Deedes were in a room next door. Mr. Profumo arrived whilst the drafting was going on. He did not wish to take any part in the drafting and left it to the lawyers. He talked with the others. Eventually, by about 3.30 a.m. or 4 a.m. a rough draft was prepared by the lawyers in the handwriting of the Solicitor-General. They brought it through to the others. The Solicitor-General read it out paragraph by paragraph. Everybody said "That's all right" except that Mr. Profumo took one point about his association with Christine Keeler. He asked, "Do I really have to say I was friendly with her?", and the others said, "Of course you must. In the face of the letter beginning 'Darling' you must acknowledge your friendship with her." The draft was then typed (which took about 20 minutes), brought back, and Mr. Profumo read it through and said he was content. By that time it was about 4.30 a.m. and they all left the House.

#### (vi) The Reason for the Meeting

178. It has sometimes been assumed that this meeting of the "five Ministers" was an investigation by them about the truth of the rumours, and that it was for that reason that Mr. Profumo's solicitor was present to protect his interests. I am satisfied it was nothing of the kind. The Ministers all accepted the assurances of Mr. Profumo (previously given) that the rumours were untrue and were concerned to see that they were refuted in the most emphatic way possible, namely, by his making a personal statement in the House. It was known that he had been waiting for an opportunity of a libel action to refute them—and here an occasion had arisen (owing to the statements in the House) where they could be refuted by a personal statement. The solicitor was called in so as to make sure that this personal statement would not embarrass any action Mr. Profumo might bring.

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179. The reason for the long session (three hours from 1.30 a.m. to 4.30 a.m.) was not because the five Ministers were conducting a detailed investigation, but because of the long time it took to get hold of Mr. Clogg and Mr. Profumo at that hour of night. The actual drafting of the personal statement and discussion of it only took about one and a half hours. The reason for it being done at that hour was the desirability in the interest of good government that these very damaging rumours should be scotched at once without being given further prominence over the week-end. The thought in all their minds was *not*, "Is Mr. Profumo's story true?"—for they accepted it as true coming from a colleague—but *rather*, "He ought to make a personal statement in the House in the morning so as to refute these rumours".

(vii) A Point in Mitigation

180. There is one thing which should be said in mitigation of Mr. Profumo's conduct. He did not seek to excuse himself by reason of the very exceptional circumstances of that night. But his wife made this statement to me: "This is terribly important. I would like to make a statement about this: I just simply know that, if it had not been for the extraordinary concatenation of circumstances of timing that day, and that early morning, Jack would never have made that statement. I was there and I know about the sleeping pills and the tiredness, and the fact that we were really groping round the house, letting in strange people and getting through loads of reporters still on the doorstep. I sat up in the drawing room with the cat on my lap until he came back at 4.45 a.m. and he said 'This is the statement'. . . . I am sure that, had we had time, as a husband and wife, instead of . . . with a time gun."

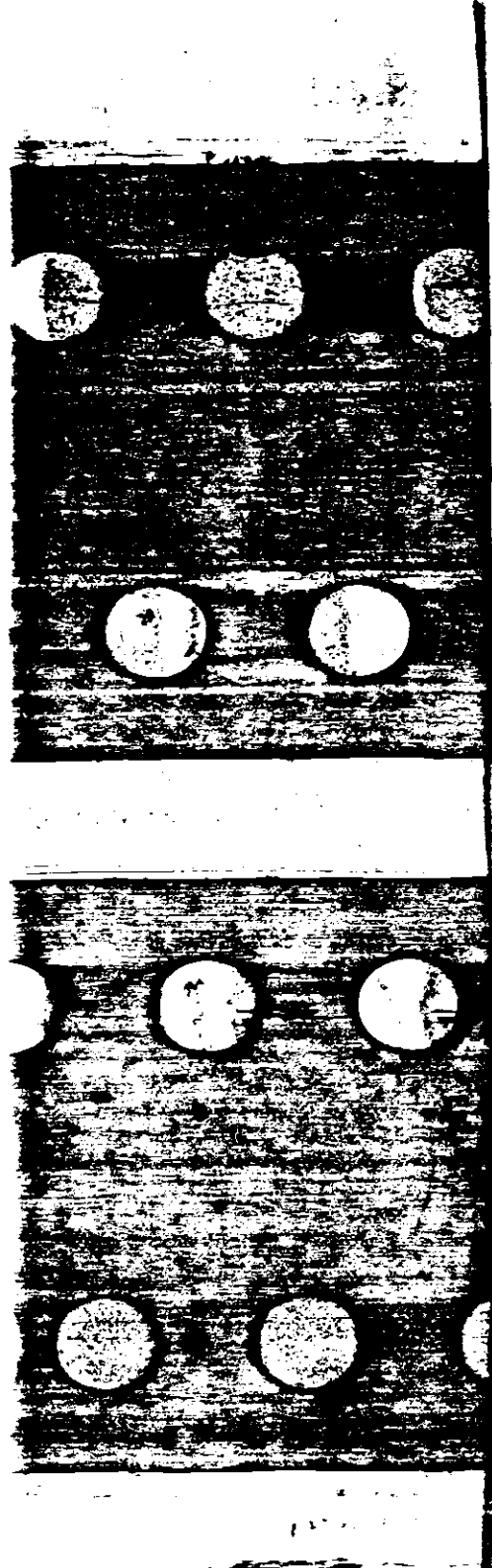
(viii) The Knowledge of the Five Ministers

181. I do not consider it part of my duty to assess the responsibility of Ministers to the House. That is a Parliamentary matter upon which I would not seek to venture. But I do consider it my duty to set out the knowledge which the Ministers had at the time when they drafted and approved the personal statement made by Mr. Profumo, the considerations which were present in their minds, and the steps they took to satisfy themselves of its truth.

(A) The two Ministers who had most to do with it were the Chief Whip and the Attorney-General. The Solicitor-General had a fair amount, but more as assisting the Attorney-General. Their evidence before me disclosed these matters:

- (1) They knew the rumours about Mr. Profumo, which, stated shortly, were these: (a) the rumour as to *immorality* that Mr. Profumo had had an illicit association with Christine Keeler; (b) the rumour as to *security* that the Russian Ivanov had also had an association with her about the same time; (c) the rumour as to the *perversion of justice* that Mr. Profumo had helped her to disappear. Only this last rumour as to the disappearance had been raised in the House that night, but they felt that all the rumours should be dealt with in the statement.

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- (2) As to the rumour as to *immorality*. They knew the sort of girl that Christine Keeler was *now*, but Mr. Profumo said that, at the time he knew her, she was very different. They knew, on his own admission, that he had been to Stephen Ward's flat on several occasions when Christine Keeler was amongst the guests, and that, on two occasions, they were alone together before the other guests arrived. They knew, on his own admission, that he had written her a letter starting 'Darling' but he said that it was simply a short note, saying that he could not come to a cocktail party. They knew she had told her story to a newspaper and had handed the newspaper the 'Darling' letter.
- (3) They had very much in mind the case of Mr. Galbraith, who had been assailed by rumours and resigned, and yet the rumours had turned out to be utterly false, and they did not want a repetition of anything of the kind.
- (4) They were of opinion that a Minister ought not to stay in office if there are scandalous rumours about him which he is not prepared to answer. The scandal which loomed large in their minds was the illicit association with Christine Keeler. The security aspect of the Russian was quite incidental. So also was the disappearance of Christine Keeler. It was essential therefore that Mr. Profumo should take the earliest opportunity of answering the scandal of his association with Christine Keeler.
- (5) In answering the scandal, they considered this one point to be crucial: Had Mr. Profumo *in fact* committed adultery with Christine Keeler or not? They took it that, if he had not *in fact* committed adultery, the rumour lacked foundation. It would incidentally clear the other rumours too: for if he had not committed adultery, he was not a security risk: and there was no motive for helping her disappear. It may be questioned, however, whether that was the crucial point. The real point may be, *not* whether Mr. Profumo had *in fact* committed adultery, but whether his conduct (proved or admitted) was such as to lead ordinary people *reasonably to believe* that he had. If that were the real point, the disarming answer of Mr. Profumo will be remembered: "Nobody will believe that I didn't sleep with her, but it happens to be true." It is for Parliament to consider what was the proper point for consideration: though I may perhaps illustrate the point by an analogy drawn from the civil law. If a man commits adultery, his wife may have just cause for leaving him, but it does not depend on his *in fact* committing adultery. If he associated with another woman in such circumstances that, on the proved or admitted facts, his wife *reasonably believes* he has committed adultery with her, again his wife has just cause for leaving him. The reason is because his conduct is such as to destroy the confidence and trust which should subsist between them.
- (6) In considering this one point (whether Mr. Profumo *had in fact* committed adultery) they did not regard themselves as conducting an investigation or inquiry but rather as concerned to protect a colleague from rumours with which (if his assurances were accepted) he had been improperly assailed. The Law Officers tested his assurances as a lawyer would his client, by telling him to be absolutely frank with

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them, asking him questions, eliciting his answers, and considering his conduct. Then, having come to the conclusion that his assurances could and should be accepted, they felt they should go no further. The Chief Whip tested his assurances in a commonsense way and also accepted them. It is a matter for Parliament to consider whether they should have gone further. I only record the fact that they did not have a sight of the 'Darling' letter. They did not ask the newspaper to let them see it, nor did they ask Mr. Profumo to get it for them. (The Attorney-General told me he felt it would be improper, on behalf of a prospective plaintiff, to ask a prospective defendant what evidence he had.) I also record the fact that they had no knowledge of the statement made by Christine Keeler to the police on the 26th January, 1963, or by Stephen Ward to the police on the 5th February, 1963, which was passed to the Security Service on the 7th February, 1963. (Both the Chief Whip and the Attorney-General told me that if they had had those statements they might have taken a very different view. They might not have been content to take Mr. Profumo's word, and they might have insisted on going further, as, for instance, by confronting Mr. Profumo with them. Mr. Profumo told me that, if he had been faced with them, he too might have taken a different attitude.)

- (7) They were all conscious of the very damaging situation which would arise if Mr. Profumo was not telling the truth and that is why they tested it, as far as they felt they possibly could, before accepting it.

(B) The Leader of the House (Mr. Iain Macleod) and the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. William Deedes) had much less to do with the matter. They had heard the rumours but had taken no part until this night. They had no special knowledge and they took part in the meeting for these reasons: Mr. Macleod because he was the Leader of the House and specially concerned if a personal statement was to be made; and Mr. Deedes because he was on the front bench and had heard all that had been said in the House, and was able to give a first-hand account of it. They did not regard this meeting in the least as an investigation or inquiry, but only as a refutation of rumours by a Minister whose reputation had been unjustly assailed.

#### (ix) The Home Secretary

182. The Home Secretary left the House immediately after the debate ended and went home. He was not called back to the meeting. The question has been asked, why was he not called back? The answer is that no one thought of it: He had never been in the picture previously. It never occurred to the Chief Whip or the Attorney-General that he was concerned in any way. The meeting was concerned with a personal statement regarding a Minister's reputation. It was not regarded as a security matter, except incidentally. Even if it had been regarded as a security matter, they would have thought that it was the responsibility of the Prime Minister and not a matter for the Home Secretary. This seems to have been a common understanding at that time. The Directive of Sir David Maxwell Fyfe of 24th September, 1952 (referred to in Part II of this Report, which makes the Director-General of the Security Service responsible to the Home Secretary

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but with a right of direct access to the Prime Minister), had never been announced: and it does not seem to have been generally known. Apart from the security aspect there was the disappearance of a witness. That, too, was regarded as only incidental to the essential concern of the meeting, which was to refute the rumours with which a Minister had been assailed. No one thought of calling back the Home Secretary.

(x) The Prime Minister

183. On the morning of Friday, 22nd March, at 9.30 a.m. the Chief Whip and the Attorney-General called on the Prime Minister and discussed with him the draft statement. The Prime Minister made two minor drafting amendments and approved it. The Prime Minister had been fully aware of all that had taken place since early February, 1963. The Chief Whip and his Private Secretary had kept him informed of the rumours and of what Mr. Profumo said about them. But the Prime Minister himself had never at any time discussed these rumours with Mr. Profumo. He told me that the reasons were twofold: First, if a Prime Minister sees a Minister and asks a question of this kind, there is no 'follow-up'. The Prime Minister could either believe it or disbelieve it, and if he disbelieved it, he could not do business again as a Prime Minister with him. Secondly, he thought it better to get friends of his own age, the Attorney-General, the Chief Whip, and others to talk to him: and if there was anything in it, he would say it to them. Over this period the Prime Minister was told repeatedly by them that Mr. Profumo stuck absolutely by his story. And then, when he was told that Mr. Profumo was prepared to make a personal statement in the House, the Prime Minister was satisfied completely of the truth of it.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PERSONAL STATEMENT ITSELF

#### (i) The Statement and its Reception

184. Shortly after 11 a.m. on Friday, 22nd March, 1963, Mr. Profumo made his personal statement to the House. The Prime Minister, the Leader of the House, and the Attorney-General sat beside him when he rose to make it. It was in these terms:

"With permission, Sir, I wish to make a personal statement.

I understand that in the debate on the Consolidated Fund Bill last night, under protection of parliamentary privilege, the Hon. Gentlemen the Members for Dudley (Mr. Wigg) and for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman), and the Hon. Lady the Member for Blackburn (Mrs. Castle), opposite, spoke of rumours connecting a Minister with a Miss Keeler and a recent trial at the Central Criminal Court. It was alleged that people in high places might have been responsible for concealing information concerning the disappearance of a witness and the perversion of justice.

I understand that my name has been connected with the rumours about the disappearance of Miss Keeler.

I would like to take this opportunity of making a personal statement about these matters.

I last saw Miss Keeler in December, 1961, and I have not seen her since. I have no idea where she is now. Any suggestion that I was in any way connected with or responsible for her absence from the trial at the Old Bailey is wholly and completely untrue.

My wife and I first met Miss Keeler at a house party in July, 1961, at Cliveden. Among a number of people there was Dr. Stephen Ward, whom we already knew slightly, and a Mr. Ivanov, who was an attaché at the Russian Embassy.

The only other occasion that my wife or I met Mr. Ivanov was for a moment at the official reception for Major Gagarin at the Soviet Embassy.

My wife and I had a standing invitation to visit Dr. Ward.

Between July and December, 1961, I met Miss Keeler on about half a dozen occasions at Dr. Ward's flat, when I called to see him and his friends. Miss Keeler and I were on friendly terms. There was no impropriety whatsoever in my acquaintanceship with Miss Keeler.

Mr. Speaker, I have made this personal statement because of what was said in the House last evening by the three Hon. Members, and which, of course, was protected by privilege. I shall not hesitate to ~~write~~ write for libel and slander if scandalous allegations are made or repeated outside the House."

185. I am sure that the Prime Minister and all the Ministers were satisfied of the truth of that statement. They could not conceive that any

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of their colleagues would have the effrontery to make a false statement to the House. The business of the country could not be carried on if a member of the Government could not accept the word of another implicitly.

(ii) "He's a Liar"

186. But one or two members of the House did not accept the truth of Mr. Profumo's statement. And I must deal at this point with a suggestion that the Prime Minister himself knew that the statement was untrue. It appears that early in March, 1963, Mr. Profumo said words to this effect to a friend.

"I've got involved with a girl. I wrote her a letter. The *Sunday Pictorial* have got it and it can come out any day. I've had to tell Valerie, the P.M., my boss."

The friend seems to have interpreted this statement as meaning that Mr. Profumo had an *illicit* association with a girl and had confessed his *guilt* to his wife and to the Prime Minister. The friend told a Conservative M.P. of the conversation and he interpreted it likewise. He was so convinced of its truth that, when Mr. Profumo made the personal statement on 22nd March, 1963, he disbelieved it. He whispered to his neighbour, saying of Profumo, "He's a liar". And in the division on 17th June, 1963, when the Prime Minister's conduct was under scrutiny, he abstained from voting.

187. I am quite satisfied that both Mr. Profumo's friend and the Conservative M.P. misinterpreted what Mr. Profumo said. All that Mr. Profumo said to his friend was to the effect that he had got into a difficult situation because of his friendship with a girl: and that he had had to tell his wife and the Chief Whip and the Prime Minister's Private Secretary about it. He never confessed to them that he had an *illicit* association with the girl. Quite the contrary, he assured them that there was no improper association. And he had never spoken to the Prime Minister about it at all. It is, I fear, such misunderstandings as this which have led to most unfounded suggestions. There is no ground whatever for suggesting that the Prime Minister knew Mr. Profumo's statement to be untrue. He believed it to be true.

(iii) The Aftermath

188. For a short moment it looked as if Mr. Profumo's personal statement had been effective. In many quarters (though not in all) his reputation seemed restored. On Friday, 22nd March, 1963, after the statement, he and his wife went to the races at Sandown Park and were photographed there by the newspapers. A few days later Christine Keeler endorsed his statement, thus contradicting her earlier stories to the Press. On being discovered in Spain, she said (in the *Daily Express* of 26th March, 1963), "What Mr. Profumo says is quite correct. I have not been in his company since 1961". On getting back to England she gave her story to the *News of the World* (Sunday, 31st March, 1963), "Certainly both he and his wife were *lovers* of mine. But it was a friendship no one can criticise". She was paid £100 for the story.

189. Stephen Ward also seemed to endorse Mr. Profumo's statement. On 26th March, 1963, he told Mr. George Wigg in the House of Commons



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(amongst other things) about the Cliveden week-end and added that subsequently Mr. Profumo visited his flat on at least six occasions. He said that, so far as he knew, nothing improper took place.

190. But not everyone was content. Some soon returned to the association with Christine Keeler. On Saturday, 23rd March, 1963, the *Daily Sketch* came out with a banner headline 'Lucky John Profumo', saying that "the spectacle of a Minister of the Crown having to get up to explain his acquaintance with a 21-year-old girl is, to say the least, unedifying". On 30th March, 1963, the French newspaper, the *Paris-Match*, published an article saying that "Christine disparaît mystérieusement. Profumo a aidé Christine s'enfuir." Mr. Profumo brought an action for libel in the French Courts: and the *Paris-Match* published a retraction. On 6th April, 1963, the Italian magazine *Il Tempo* published an article saying that the name of Mr. Profumo continued to be associated—notwithstanding his energetic denial in the House of Commons—with that of a good-looking girl: and that, according to public rumour John Profumo would have encouraged the departure of the girl. It was distributed in this country. On 8th April, 1963, Mr. Profumo issued a writ against the distributors. On 10th April, 1963, the action was settled. Counsel for Mr. Profumo stated in open court that the allegations were unjustifiable and without foundation. The defendants paid £50 damages and all the costs: Mr. Profumo said he proposed to give the £50 to an Army charity.

191. To go on for a moment: After Mr. Profumo, on 5th June, 1963, acknowledged that he had had improper relations with Christine Keeler, the distributors claimed damages from Mr. Profumo because of his unwarranted claim against them and he had to pay a large sum in settlement. But he never acknowledged, of course, that he had helped her disappear. That he has always and resolutely denied.

192. Others raised the security issue. On Sunday, 24th March, 1963, the *Sunday Telegraph* published two articles headed "Dr. Ward's links with Soviet official" and "The Boil is Lanced". Stephen Ward regarded these as a libel upon him and instructed his solicitor to issue a writ against the newspaper.

#### (iv) Mr. Wigg's Memorandum

193. On Monday, 25th March, 1963, Mr. George Wigg, M.P., appeared on television and said that security was the main consideration. He was critical of Ivanov. On the next day, 26th March, Stephen Ward sought an interview with Mr. Wigg in the House of Commons and defended Ivanov. He gave a long rambling account which Mr. Wigg set down in a memorandum in considerable detail. The memorandum shows that Stephen Ward said that his friendship with Ivanov had been used in the interests of the country. Turning to Mr. Profumo, he described the Cliveden week-end and said that subsequently Mr. Profumo visited his flat on at least six occasions, and that "as far as he knew, nothing improper took place". He said that the Intelligence Service knew all about the visits. He was certain that ~~never at any~~ time had Mr. Profumo put himself at risk in security matters in his contact with Ivanov. He described the recent activities of Christine and ~~Mammi~~ and he concluded by saying that he wished to convince Mr. Wigg that on security matters he was in the clear.

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194. During the interview Stephen Ward told Mr. Wigg that he had written to Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P. Mr. Wigg told Mr. Wilson, who looked up his correspondence and found the letter of 7th November, 1962 (paragraph 49) and on 27th March, 1963, he went and showed it to the Prime Minister. He said that a security issue might be involved: and he thought the Prime Minister ought to know about it. Shortly afterwards Mr. Wigg got out his memorandum, and sent it to Mr. Wilson who consulted Sir Frank Soskice, M.P. They considered it of such importance that it should be passed to the Prime Minister so that any possible security implication could be examined. So Mr. Wilson sent it to him (paragraph 209).

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#### CHAPTER XIV

22nd MARCH, 1963-5th JUNE, 1963—UNEASY TWO MONTHS

##### (i) The Home Secretary asks for Information

195. The Home Secretary believed Mr. Profumo's personal statement. He had absolutely no reason for disbelieving him. But it left him feeling very suspicious towards Stephen Ward. Then he heard rumours that the Security Service had been so worried that they had sent anonymous letters to Mrs. Profumo. The Home Secretary felt that he ought to know the facts. So on 27th March, 1963, he sent for the Head of the Security Service and the Commissioner of Police and asked to be put into the picture. There was present too the Permanent Under-Secretary of State of the Home Office. The meeting was so valuable that it affords a useful pattern as to the way in which such a problem—of mixed security and police interest—should be handled.

196. At this meeting the Head of the Security Service told the Home Secretary that there was no truth whatever in the rumours that they had sent anonymous letters to Mrs. Profumo. He then gave the Home Secretary an outline of the steps the Service had taken, and said that, when Ivanov had left the country, the security interest had ceased. Then he added two matters of such importance that I set out this record of them made by him the very next day:

- (1) "In addition to this there had been statements by Christine Keeler and one or two others that Stephen Ward had urged Christine to ask Mr. Profumo for information about American intentions to provide the West Germans with the Bomb. If these allegations were true, there might well be a case against Stephen Ward under the Official Secrets Act . . . we thought however that the witnesses in any such prosecution would prove unreliable and we were not inclined to pursue the matter."
- (2) "The security interest in the whole case was limited to Ivanov and his contacts, and it was no part of our business to concern ourselves with what Ward was up to in connection with the girls with whom he associated. The Home Secretary agreed with this."

197. The Home Secretary then asked the Commissioner of Police whether there was a police interest. The Commissioner said that there probably would be grounds for the prosecution of Stephen Ward if the police were able to get the full story, but he very much doubted whether they would succeed in this.

198. Two things are to be noticed about this meeting:

- (1) It was the first occasion on which any Minister had been told about the request for information about the bomb. The Home Secretary did not know he was the first to be told about it. He did not pass it on to any other Minister. He thought he was simply being brought up to date by the Security Service.

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(2) The Home Secretary agreed that it was no part of the business of the Security Service to concern themselves with what Stephen Ward was up to with the girls.

199. Further, it should be noticed that this intervention by the Home Secretary had two important consequences: First, the Head of the Security Service immediately gave further consideration to the question of prosecuting Ward under the Official Secrets Act (for endeavouring to get information) and took advice upon it which was against a prosecution. He decided on 4th April, 1963, not to take any action on it. Secondly, the Commissioner of Police immediately gave further consideration to the question of prosecuting Ward, and on 1st April, 1963, set on foot the investigation which eventually led to his prosecution and conviction.

(ii) The Police Investigate Ward's Activities

200. On 25th March, 1963, the Criminal Investigation Department began to receive anonymous communications alleging that Stephen Ward was living on the immoral earnings of the girls, and suggesting that he was being protected by his friends in high places. On 27th March, 1963, the Home Secretary asked the Commissioner whether there was a police interest in Ward. On 1st April, 1963, the Commissioner decided that Stephen Ward's activities should be investigated. On 4th April the police began to take statements. They took the statements from many of the girls and other persons who might be able to help. In particular they took a statement from Christine Keeler on 4th and 5th April, 1963, which she signed. This dealt mainly with Stephen Ward's conduct: but in it she said that she had had intercourse with Mr. Profumo. She said he had taken her to his house whilst his wife was away and she described the house so exactly that one would think it was not likely to have been invented. These are her words:

"When I went to Jack Profumo's we went off the Outer Circle to a house on the left-hand side of a small road. I went up some steps into a square hall where there are two large ornamental animals, I think dogs. The dining room was on the right and the stairs are straight ahead on the right. The stairs bend to the left and on the wall is a picture, of all the things that Valerie likes and dislikes including pigeons and jewellery. Facing the top of the stairs is Jack's office, with a drinks cabinet inside. I noticed a strange telephone and he said it was a scrambler. Next door is the Profumo's bedroom with an adjoining bathroom. I think there were a lot of mirrors in the bathroom. There is a table in the centre of the dining room."

She also said:

"I last saw Jack (Profumo) in December, 1961. Stephen Ward had asked me to get information from Jack about the Americans giving the Germans the Bomb. I did not get this information because it was ridiculous and could have been made in a joke."

[Note.—The question may be asked why these statements were not reported to any Minister. I deal with this later in paragraph 282.]

The police took several further statements from her, namely on 6th and 26th April, and 6th and 24th May, 1963. On 25th April, 1963, they took a statement from Marilyn Rice-Davies. They took many others.

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(iii) Stephen Ward Attempts to Stave Off a Prosecution

201. These inquiries by the police got to Stephen Ward's notice and he began to be nervous about them. He took exceptional action. On 7th May, 1963, he telephoned the Prime Minister's Private Secretary and asked to see him. An appointment was made for that evening and arrangements were made for an officer of the Security Service to be present.

202. A note was taken of the conversation. It appeared to the Prime Minister's Private Secretary at the time (and the note bears it out) that the main object of Stephen Ward's visit was to get the police inquiries called off and to blackmail the Government by threatening that, unless the inquiries were dropped, he would expose Mr. Profumo's illicit association with Christine Keeler. Here are a few extracts from the note: Stephen Ward said "You see the facts as presented probably in Parliament were not strictly speaking just like that. I fear a change may be forced in the situation . . . I made a considerable sacrifice for Mr. Profumo . . . I feel I should tell you the truth of what really happened. You probably know as a matter of fact anyway. He wrote Miss Keeler a series of letters. The attachment was a much deeper one than . . . I don't know whether you have any feelings about this, whether there is anything you can do. I know myself here that there is a great deal of potentially extremely explosive material in what I've told you".

203. Stephen Ward next took to writing letters, still in the hope, apparently, of staving off a prosecution. On 19th May, 1963, he wrote this letter to the Home Secretary:

"It has come to my attention that the Marylebone police are questioning my patients and friends in a line, however tactful, which is extremely damaging to me both professionally and socially. This enquiry has been going on day after day for weeks.

The instruction to do this must have come from the Home Office.

Over the past few weeks I have done what I could to shield Mr. Profumo from his indiscretion, about which I complained to the Security Service at the time. When he made a statement in Parliament I backed it up although I knew it to be untrue.

Possibly my efforts to conceal his part and to return to him a letter which Miss Keeler had sold to the *Sunday Pictorial* might make it appear that I had something to conceal myself. I have not.

The allegations which appear to be the cause of investigation, and which I only know through the line of questioning repeated to me, are malicious and entirely false. It is an invention of the Press that Miss Keeler knew a lot of important people.

It was by accident that she met Mr. Profumo and through Lord Astor that she met him again. I intend to take the blame no longer.

That I was against this liaison is a matter of record in the War Office.

Sir Godfrey Nicholson who has been a friend for 25 years is in possession of most of the facts since I consulted him at an early stage—

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May I ask that the person who has lodged the false information against me should be prosecuted.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Ward.

(Stephen Ward sent a summary of this letter to the newspapers but they did not publish it.)

204. To which the very proper reply was sent next day:

"The Home Secretary has asked me to explain that the police, in making whatever inquiries they think proper, do not act under his direction."

205. On the 20th May, 1963, Stephen Ward wrote to his Member of Parliament (Sir Wavell Wakefield) a long letter, in the course of which he said:

"Possibly an inquiry may be necessary when a Minister has not told the truth to Parliament."

Sir Wavell Wakefield passed the letter to the Chief Whip.

206. On 20th May, 1963, Stephen Ward wrote also to Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P., saying:

"Obviously my efforts to conceal the fact that Mr. Profumo had not told the truth in Parliament have made it look as if I myself had something to hide. It is quite clear now that they must wish the facts to be known, and I shall see that they are."

207. On 23rd May, 1963, Mr. Wilson sent a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister.

208. This spate of letters by Stephen Ward had their effect. Questions were tabled in Parliament by Mr. Ben Parkin and Mr. Chuter Ede for the Home Secretary to answer. They were designed to ask him what information he had received from Stephen Ward in connection with inquiries carried out by the Metropolitan Police—no doubt meaning the information in his letter of 19th May, 1963—but these Questions were subsequently withdrawn. There was also a burst of speculation in Fleet Street. Everyone there had a strong feeling that the stories circulating about Mr. Profumo were true. Things were heading towards a climax.

#### (iv) Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P., takes up the Security Issue

209. : On 9th April, 1963, Mr. Wilson sent Mr. Wigg's memorandum (paragraph 193) to the Prime Minister through the Chief Whip. On 17th April, 1963, the Prime Minister replied:

"My Chief Whip has given to me the letter and enclosure from you dated 9th April dealing with George Wigg's conversation with a Mr. Stephen Ward. I will ask the appropriate authorities to have an examination made of the information and will get in touch with you later on if this seems necessary."

(The reference to "a Mr. Stephen Ward" has since been criticised as disingenuous.)

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210. The Prime Minister did have inquiries made of the Security Service. On 25th April they reported their interviews with Stephen Ward and the warning to Mr. Profumo. They said:

"We have no reason to suppose that Mr. Profumo stands in need of further advice about security" and added, "There is no truth in the story that the Security Service was informed of the dates of, or anything else in connection with, Mr. Profumo's alleged visits to Ward or to Miss Keeler."

211. On 14th May, 1963, the Prime Minister replied to Mr. Wilson:

"I handed all the material to the appropriate authorities who studied it very carefully. There seems to be nothing in the papers you sent which requires me to take action."

212. Mr. Wilson felt it necessary to pursue the matter further. On Monday, 27th May, 1963, at Mr. Wilson's request, a meeting was held in the Prime Minister's room in the House of Commons. Mr. Wilson said he was disturbed to receive the Prime Minister's letter, and that Ward was a self-confessed Soviet intermediary. He said that if the Government were not prepared to initiate any action, he would reserve the right to raise the matter in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister said that all the material had been examined by the security authorities and they were satisfied that there were no unresolved security problems left over. He would however ask the security authorities to look again at all the material and advise him on the position.

213. The Prime Minister did as he said. He asked the Security Service to look at it again. And on Wednesday, 29th May, 1963, the Head of the Security Service reported to the Prime Minister and disclosed to him (what he and his office had not known before) that,

"in a statement which Christine Keeler made to the police in January 1963 she said that on one occasion, when she was going to meet Mr. Profumo, Ward had asked her to discover from him the date on which certain atomic secrets were to be handed to West Germany by the Americans. It is understood that Miss Keeler denies having ever put such a question to Mr. Profumo . . . I am advised that the evidence would not be likely to support a successful prosecution of Ward under the Official Secrets Act. He is not known to us to have been in touch with any Russian since Ivanov's departure. The security risk that Ward now represents seems to me to be slight."

(v) The Lord Chancellor's Inquiry

214. On Wednesday, 29th May, 1963, the Prime Minister had a meeting with the Lord Chancellor and the Chief Whip during which the Prime Minister asked the Lord Chancellor to undertake an inquiry himself into the relevant papers: and on 30th May, 1963, the Prime Minister wrote to Mr. Wilson telling him of it:

"I have been thinking about our talk on Monday. I am sure in my own mind that the security aspect of the Ward case has been fully and efficiently watched, but I think it important that you should be in no doubt about it."

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I have therefore asked the Lord Chancellor to look carefully at the security reports and other documents which I have received in connection with this case and to make any inquiry which he deems necessary from the security authorities and the police, and to advise me if, in his opinion, any further action is desirable."

215. The Lord Chancellor commenced his inquiry on 30th May, 1963, and reported on 13th June, 1963. Much had happened in between.

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CHAPTER XV

Mr. PROFUMO'S RESIGNATION

216. The security issue raised by Mr. Wilson and the burst of speculation in Fleet Street had their effect. During the week, 27th-30th May, the Chief Whip and the Prime Minister's Private Secretary separately saw Mr. Profumo. Mr. Profumo was told that it looked as if there would be an inquiry. If there was any flaw in his story it would do the Government enormous damage. It was put to him strongly that, if there was anything untrue in his statement to the House, he ought to reveal it of his own accord. He again denied that he had said anything that was untrue. He was told that the Lord Chancellor might want to see him some time the following week.

217. On Friday, 31st May, Parliament adjourned for the Recess. The Prime Minister left for a short holiday in Scotland. Mr. and Mrs. Profumo left for a short holiday in Venice till Thursday, 6th June. The Press thought something was going to happen. At London Airport Mr. and Mrs. Profumo were inundated with Press men and cameras. They arrived at Venice in the evening. Mr. Profumo told me that he had already decided that he could no longer go about with this terrible guilt on his mind. He decided to tell his wife. But they had a quiet dinner together first. After dinner Mr. Profumo told his wife the truth—for the first time—that he had had an illicit association with Christine Keeler. He told her all the details. They talked over it most of the night. Mrs. Profumo said, "Oh, darling, we must go home now just as soon as we can and face up to it." That is what they did. Flying back would attract attention. So they went back next day on the night train and came back by boat.

218. It so happened that (after they had decided to return) at about 9.30 a.m. on the Saturday morning a message came through by telephone to the hotel in Venice saying that he was wanted back a day earlier. That was true. The Lord Chancellor was starting his inquiry and wanted to see Mr. Profumo on Wednesday, 5th June. But they had already decided to return.

219. Mr. and Mrs. Profumo arrived in England on Whit Sunday, 3rd June, and early next morning motored down to Suffolk to Mr. and Mrs. Hare (who were great friends of theirs). Mr. Profumo told Mr. Hare the truth. After taking his advice, Mr. Profumo returned to London and on Tuesday, 4th June, he saw the Chief Whip and the Prime Minister's Private Secretary. He said without preamble, "I have to tell you that I did sleep with Miss Keeler and my statement in that respect was untrue." It was plain, of course, that he could not remain as a Member of the Administration. He must resign.

220. These letters then passed:

"Dear Prime Minister,

You will recollect that on the 22nd March, following certain allegations made in Parliament, I made a personal statement.

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At that time rumour had charged me with assisting in the disappearance of a witness and with being involved in some possible breach of security. So serious were these charges that I allowed myself to think that my personal association with that witness, which had also been the subject of rumour, was, by comparison, of minor importance only. In my statement I said that there had been no impropriety in this association. To my very deep regret I have to admit that this was not true, and that I misled you, and my colleagues, and the House. I ask you to understand that I did this to protect, as I thought, my wife and family, who were equally misled, as were my professional advisers.

I have come to realise that, by this deception, I have been guilty of a grave misdemeanour and despite the fact that there is no truth whatever in the other charges, I cannot remain a member of your Administration, nor of the House of Commons.

I cannot tell you of my deep remorse for the embarrassment I have caused to you, to my colleagues in the Government, to my constituents and to the Party which I have served for the past twenty-five years.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Profumo.

The Right Hon. Harold Macmillan, M.P."

"Dear Profumo,

The contents of your letter of 4th June have been communicated to me, and I have heard them with deep regret. This is a great tragedy for you, your family, and your friends. Nevertheless, I am sure you will understand that in the circumstances, I have no alternative but to advise The Queen to accept your resignation.

Yours very sincerely,

Harold Macmillan.

The Right Hon. John Profumo, O.B.E., M.P."

221. Mr. and Mrs. Profumo spent the next few days with friends. No one knew where they were. The reporters searched up and down the country but could not find them. The folk of the village knew. But they did not tell anyone outside. They knew they wished to be left alone.

222. Mr. Profumo did not wait on The Queen to hand over the seals of office. They were sent by messenger. He applied for the Chiltern Hundreds and ceased to represent his constituency. The House of Commons held him to have been guilty of contempt of the House. His name was removed from the Privy Council. His disgrace was complete.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### ENSUING EVENTS

223. Mr. Profumo resigned during the Whitsun recess. It was announced on Wednesday, 5th June, 1963. On 9th June, 1963, the *Sunday Mirror* published on its front page a photographic copy of Mr. Profumo's letter of 9th August, 1961, to Christine Keeler. It had come in useful after all. On the same day the *News of the World* started publishing the Christine Keeler story by instalments. They had agreed to pay her £23,000 for it.

224. The members of the House of Commons held a debate on Monday, 17th June, 1963. On 21st June, 1963, you asked me to undertake this inquiry. During the course of this report I have referred to 'Lucky' Gordon and Stephen Ward. It may be useful if I set out the bare details of their trials, but no more, for I do not consider they have any relevance to my inquiry.

#### (i) The 'Lucky' Gordon Case

225. At 12.30 a.m. on 18th April, 1963, the police received a telephone call to the effect that Christine Keeler had been attacked by Gordon a few minutes before and that police assistance was required. A search was made for Gordon and he was arrested about 24 hours later, on 19th April, 1963, at 1.20 a.m. He was committed for trial and remained in custody meanwhile.

226. On the 5th June, 1963, he came up for trial. On the 6th June, 1963, he dispensed with the services of his counsel and conducted his own defence. He said he wanted to call 30 witnesses in his defence. The Commissioner, after inquiry, decided that only two of the witnesses could actually speak as to what occurred. The police tried to find these two but could not do so. On the 7th June, 1963, Gordon made a statement from the dock. He did not give evidence on oath. The jury found him guilty of occasioning actual bodily harm and he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

227. On 11th June, 1963, he gave notice of appeal. On 30th July, 1963, the Court of Criminal Appeal allowed the appeal on the ground that there were further statements (they were statements of the two witnesses whom Gordon wished to call) which might have led the jury to have reasonable doubt.

#### (ii) The Ward Case

228. On 1st April, 1963, the police started their investigation into Ward's activities. Many statements were taken and a report was made in May to the Director of Public Prosecutions. A conference was held with counsel on 7th June. On that very evening information reached Scotland Yard that Ward was about to leave the country. In consequence Ward was arrested on Saturday, 8th June. He applied for bail but was refused it. He remained in custody throughout the hearings before the magistrate. These were not concluded until 3rd July, 1963. He was then committed for trial, but allowed bail, in spite of objections by the police.

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229. The trial of Ward started on 22nd July and continued for eight days. He was allowed bail throughout. On 30th July, 1963, the Judge started his summing-up, but had not finished it when the court adjourned. On the morning of 31st July Ward was found unconscious, having taken an overdose of drugs. The Judge concluded his summing-up in Ward's absence. He was found guilty of living on the earnings of prostitution between 1st June, 1961, and 31st August, 1962 (Christine Keeler being the woman concerned) and between 1st September, 1962, and 31st December, 1962 (Marilyn Rice-Davies being the woman concerned). The Judge postponed sentence till Ward was fit to appear. But Ward never regained consciousness and died on 3rd August, 1963. The story ends, as it began, with him.

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**PART II**

**THE OPERATION OF THE  
SECURITY SERVICE**

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## CHAPTER XVII

### THE ROLE OF THE SECURITY SERVICE

230. No one can understand the role of the Security Service in the Profumo affair unless he realises the cardinal principle that their operations are to be used for one purpose, and one purpose only, *the Defence of the Realm*. They are not to be used so as to pry into any man's private conduct, or business affairs: or even into his political opinions, except in so far as they are subversive, that is, they would contemplate the overthrow of the Government by unlawful means. This principle was enunciated by Sir Findlater Stewart in his Report of 27th November, 1945, paragraph 37, which has formed the guide for the Service ever since. It was re-stated by Sir David Maxwell Fyfe in a Directive of 24th September, 1952, and re-affirmed by every Home Secretary since. Most people in this country would, I am sure, whole-heartedly support this principle, for it would be intolerable to us to have anything in the nature of a Gestapo or Secret Police to snoop into all that we do, let alone into our morals.

231. Once this principle is appreciated, it will be realised that the only proper role of the Security Service in the Profumo affair was to defend the country against any activities by or on behalf of Russian agents. In particular against the activities of Captain Ivanov. For Captain Ivanov was not only a Russian Naval Attaché. He was also a Russian Intelligence Officer. He must not be allowed to get secret information which the Russians needed. Stephen Ward was a sympathiser with the Russians. He was a close friend of Captain Ivanov and was indiscreet. He counted many prominent people among his friends. He should not be allowed to get secret information which he might pass on to Ivanov. Ward was known to be involved in a call-girl racket. He was 'the provider of poppies for rich people'. If any of his girls came into contact—both with Captain Ivanov and also with Ministers of the Crown—that would be a situation which needed watching in case Captain Ivanov might use the girls as a channel of information.

232. There was yet this further possible role for the Security Service. Was it possible to get Ivanov to defect from the Russians and help us? For, as a Russian Intelligence Officer, he might have information of much value.

233. When the conduct of the Security Service is examined (as I will examine it in the following pages), it will, I think, be seen that they confined themselves to the role I have described. They had, at one critical point, carefully to consider whether they should inquire into the moral behaviour of Mr. Profumo—they suspected that he had had an illicit association with Christine Keeler—but they decided that it was not their concern. It was a new problem for them to have to consider the conduct of a Minister of the Crown, and they decided it by reference to the principles laid down for them, to wit, they must limit their inquiries to what is necessary to the Defence of the Realm: and steer clear of all political questions. And this is what they did.

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LORD  
DENNING'S  
REPORT  
Sept 1963.



234. The only criticism that I can see of the decision is that the conduct of Mr. Profumo disclosed a character defect, which pointed to his being a security risk (e.g., the girl might try to blackmail him or bring pressure on him to disclose secret information). But at the time when the information came to their knowledge, his association with the girl had ceased. Captain Ivanov had gone. And what remained was not sufficient to warrant an infringement of the principle that the Security Service must not pry into private lives. At any rate, it was not such a risk as they should investigate without express instructions.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

235. There has been considerable misapprehension about the Ministerial responsibility for the Security Service: and this misapprehension seems to me to be the cause of some of the troubles that have arisen. The relevant documents are so little available that it may be helpful if I give considerable extracts.

#### (i) The Prime Minister till 1952

236. Up till 1952 the Prime Minister was responsible for security. This followed from Sir Findlater Stewart's Report in 1945. He took as his starting point its *purpose*.

"Its purpose", he said, "is Defence of the Realm and nothing else. It follows that the Minister responsible for it *as a service* should be the Minister of Defence, or, if there is no Minister of Defence, the Prime Minister, as Chairman of the Committee of Imperial Defence. It has been argued that this would place an undue burden upon the Minister of Defence or the Prime Minister, and upon the staff of the Cabinet Secretariat. But from the very nature of the work, need for direction except on the very broadest lines can never arise above the level of Director-General. That appointment is one of great responsibility, calling for unusual experience and a rare combination of qualities; but having got the right man there is no alternative to giving him the widest discretion in the means he uses and the direction in which he applies them—always provided he does not step outside the law."

#### (ii) Sir Norman Brook's Report

237. In 1951, however, a proposal was made to transfer the responsibility for the Security Service from the Prime Minister to the Home Secretary. This was done in a report made by Sir Norman Brook. In March, 1951, he recommended that the Security Service should in future be responsible to the Home Secretary. He said:

"I believe that Sir Findlater Stewart exaggerated the 'defence' aspects of the Security Service. In practice the Security Service has little to do with those aspects of the 'defence of the realm' with which the Minister of Defence is concerned. And the arrangement by which the Security Service is directly responsible to the Prime Minister is now justified mainly by the fact that it enhances the status of the Service. In practice the functions of the Security Service are much more closely allied to those of the Home Office, which has the ultimate constitutional responsibility for 'defending the realm' against subversive activities and for preserving law and order. I recommend that the Security Service should in future be responsible to the Home Secretary. I believe that it would be helpful to the Director-General of the Security Service to be able to turn to a senior Permanent Secretary for advice and assistance on the policy aspects of his work and on his relations with other Government Departments; and that he would receive from the permanent head of the Home Office support and guidance

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which the Prime Minister's secretariat is not in a position to give. The Prime Minister's personal contact with the Director-General of the Security Service need not be wholly interrupted as a result of this change in Ministerial responsibility. The Prime Minister would doubtless continue to send for the Head of the Security Service from time to time, to discuss the general state of his work and particular matters which might be of specially close concern to him. And on matters of supreme importance and delicacy, the Head of the Service should always be able, at his initiation, to arrange a personal interview with the Prime Minister."

(iii) Sir David Maxwell Fyle's Directive

238. On 24th September, 1952, Sir David Maxwell Fyfe, then Home Secretary, issued this Directive to the Director-General of the Security Service, which is the governing instrument to-day:

1. In your appointment as Director-General of the Security Service you will be responsible to the Home Secretary personally. The Security Service is not, however, a part of the Home Office. On appropriate occasion you will have right of direct access to the Prime Minister.

2. The Security Service is part of the Defence Forces of the country. Its task is the Defence of the Realm as a whole, from external and internal dangers arising from attempts at espionage and sabotage, or from actions of persons and organisations whether directed from within or without the country, which may be judged to be subversive of the State.

3. You will take special care to see that the work of the Security Service is strictly limited to what is necessary for the purposes of this task.

4. It is essential that the Security Service should be kept absolutely free from any political bias or influence and nothing should be done that might lend colour to any suggestion that it is concerned with the interests of any particular section of the community, or with any other matter than the Defence of the Realm as a whole.

5. No enquiry is to be carried out on behalf of any Government Department unless you are satisfied that an important public interest bearing on the Defence of the Realm, as defined in paragraph 2, is at stake.

6. You and your staff will maintain the well-established convention whereby Ministers do not concern themselves with the detailed information which may be obtained by the Security Service in particular cases, but are furnished with such information only as may be necessary for the determination of any issue on which guidance is sought."

(iv) General Principles

239. After hearing a considerable body of evidence, I found general approval that the Directive of Sir David Maxwell Fyfe embodied the correct principles. I would try to summarise the salient points:

- (1) The Head of the Security Service is responsible directly to the Home Secretary for the efficient and proper working of the Service and not in the ordinary way to the Prime Minister.

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(2) The Security Service is, however, not a department of the Home Office. It operates independently under its own Director-General, but he can and does seek direction and guidance from the Home Secretary, subject always to the proviso that its activities must be absolutely free from any political bias or influence.

(3) The function of the Security Service is to defend the Realm as a whole from dangers which threaten it as a whole, such as espionage on behalf of a foreign Power, or internal organisations subversive of the State. For this purpose it must collect information about individuals, and give it to those concerned. But it must not, even at the behest of a Minister or a Government Department, take part in investigating the private lives of individuals except in a matter bearing on the Defence of the Realm as a whole.

(4) The Head of the Security Service may approach the Prime Minister himself on matters of supreme importance and delicacy, but this is not to say that the Prime Minister has any direct responsibility for the Security Service. He has certainly none in day-to-day matters. It would be a mistake for the Prime Minister to take such responsibility because he cannot in practice exercise adequate supervision, and he has not the secretariat for the purpose.

#### (v) Application of Principles

240. The result of these principles is that, if the Director-General of the Security Service is in doubt as to any aspect of his duties—as, for instance, when he gets information about a Minister or senior public servant indicating that he may be a security risk—he should consult the Home Secretary. The Home Secretary then will have to take the responsibility for further action, that is to say, whether to take steps to eliminate the security risk or to put up with it. If a mistake is made, it is the Home Secretary who will be responsible to Parliament.

241. It was suggested to me that, when the conduct of a Minister was in question, it would be preferable for the Director-General to approach the Prime Minister direct rather than approach the Home Secretary because the Home Secretary might find it embarrassing to have to investigate the conduct of another Minister. The majority view was, however, that in all cases there should be a clear and unambiguous channel to the Home Secretary.

#### (vi) Ministry of National Security

242. Most witnesses thought it was not desirable to set up a Ministry of National Security, and for these reasons: It is important that each Government Department (e.g., the Service Departments) should be regarded as responsible for its own internal security. It would lead to slackness if each Department could feel it could leave its security to others. The Security Service performs a very useful function in advising Government Departments on their security problems but should not take them over. If it be right that each Government Department is responsible for its own internal security, then the Security Service itself deals with national security as a whole. The great body of opinion before me was that this should be dealt with as the responsibility of the Home Secretary and not as the responsibility of a separate Minister.

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## CHAPTER XIX

### THE SECURITY SERVICE IN 1961 AND 1962

#### (i) The Service find out about Ward

243. It was on 20th January, 1961, that Stephen Ward first met Captain Ivanov. Their friendship developed rapidly. The Security Service soon got to know of this friendship and desired to know more about it. On 8th June, 1961, (four weeks before the Cliveden week-end), an officer of the Security Service went to see Stephen Ward at a restaurant in Marylebone. His report said this:

"Ward, who has an attractive personality and who talks well, was completely open about his association with Ivanov. Despite the fact that some of his political ideas are certainly peculiar and are exploitable by the Russians, I do not think that he is of security interest [that means he was not considered a danger] but he is obviously not a person we can make any use of." Ward took the Security Officer to his mews house where "he introduced me to a young girl, whose name I did not catch, who was obviously sharing the house with him. [This was probably Christine Keeler.] She was heavily painted and considerably overdressed and I wonder whether this is corroborating evidence that he has been involved in the call-girl racket."

244. The security officer added in the report:

"As we were saying good-bye, Ward asked whether it was all right for him to continue to see Ivanov. I replied there was no reason why he should not. He then said that, if there was any way in which he could help, he would be very ready to do so. I thanked him for his offer and asked him to get in touch with me should Ivanov at any time in the future make any propositions to him."

#### (ii) 12th July, 1961—Ward tells them of Ivanov's Request for Information

245. Four weeks later there was the Cliveden week-end, and it came immediately to the notice of the Security Service. On the Monday following the Cliveden week-end, 10th July, 1961, Stephen Ward telephoned the security officer and asked to see him. It must be remembered that the security officer had asked Ward to tell him of any propositions that Ivanov made to him. The security officer saw Ward on Wednesday, 12th July, 1961. *Stephen Ward then told the security officer that Ivanov had asked him to find out when the Americans were going to arm Western Germany with atomic weapons.* It is to be noted that Stephen Ward was quite open about this to the security officer. The security officer told Stephen Ward that he should make no attempt to fulfil Ivanov's request "and if by chance he obtained any such information through the indiscretion of any of his influential friends, he should on no account tell Ivanov".

#### (iii) Ward Claims Friendship with Mr. Profumo

246. Ward told the officer that Ivanov had spent the last Sunday at Ward's country cottage on Lord Astor's estate. There had been quite a party of celebrities there disporting themselves in the swimming pool, including

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Mr. Profumo, the Secretary of State for War. Ivanov had been much amused by their antics. Christine was there. (Ward explained that Christine was the young girl who lived in his house.) Ivanov was undoubtedly attracted by Christine. After the bathing party, Ivanov had taken her back to his (Ward's) house and they had drunk between them two bottles of whisky. Ward claimed that he and Mr. Profumo were quite close friends and that Mr. Profumo visited him at his London house. The security officer summed up his opinion of Ward in these words:

"I do not think he is a security risk in the sense that he would intentionally be disloyal, but his peculiar political beliefs, coupled with his obvious admiration of Ivanov might well cause him to be indiscreet unintentionally."

**(iv) The Service think that Mr. Profumo should be Warned**

247. The Security Service followed up this information in two ways. First they wanted to get more information about Ward's establishment and about Christine. So on 31st July, 1961, they asked the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police to make inquiries. On 8th August, 1961, Special Branch reported to Security Service that Christine could not be identified and that inquiries revealed nothing to the discredit of Ward. The address was in a respectable neighbourhood where any openly unseemly conduct would soon come to police notice. Secondly, the Security Service thought it would be wise to warn Mr. Profumo to be careful what he said to Ward; because Ward was voluble and indiscreet and might easily pass on to Ivanov any information which Mr. Profumo might let fall. Further, a thought occurred to the Security Service that, perhaps with Mr. Profumo's help, it might be possible to get Ivanov to defect. Mr. Profumo might be a "lead-in" to Ivanov. The Director-General carefully considered what to do. He felt that he could hardly approach Mr. Profumo direct on the matter. So on 31st July, 1961, he spoke to Sir Norman Brook about it. Sir Norman was the Secretary of the Cabinet and was in a position to speak to a Minister on it. He did speak to Mr. Profumo (I have dealt with this in an earlier chapter—paragraphs 33-35).

**(v) Mr. Profumo is Warned**

248. It has been widely assumed that the Security Service knew that Christine Keeler was having an affair with Mr. Profumo and Captain Ivanov at the same time: that they reported this to Sir Norman Brook; and that their object was that Sir Norman should acquaint Mr. Profumo with the danger in the situation. If the Security Service had had such knowledge I should have thought it was one of those matters of extreme delicacy where they might approach the Prime Minister direct: or, if they had reported it to Sir Norman, I would have thought that Sir Norman should have reported it to the Prime Minister. In failing to do so, he would have made a mistake, as Lord Radcliffe said in a television interview. But I am satisfied that the Security Service did not know that Christine Keeler was having an affair with Mr. Profumo or even with Captain Ivanov. They knew she was Stephen Ward's mistress in the house, that was all. Their two purposes at this time were (1) to warn Mr. Profumo to be careful what he said to Stephen Ward, and (2) to see if there was a 'lead-in' to Captain Ivanov. It would hardly seem to need the intervention of the Prime Minister for these purposes.

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249. It has been said that the Security Service ought to have done differently. They ought to have set a watch on Ward's house or got permission to tap his telephone calls: for they would then have discovered that Mr. Profumo was having an affair with Christine Keeler at Stephen Ward's house and that Captain Ivanov was often at the house too. But I am satisfied that this criticism is mistaken. The Security Service know all that they needed to know about the Ivanov-Ward relationship: and it would not have increased their knowledge to set a watch on Ward's house. They knew that Ivanov was a Russian Intelligence Officer. They already had from other sources information as to Ivanov's visits to and relations with Ward. They knew also that Mr. Profumo was on occasions visiting Ward's house. They acted on that information by having Mr. Profumo warned. I do not think the Security Service should be blamed for not doing more.

(vi) Suspicions Grow about Ward

250. From November, 1961, to May, 1962, many people were beginning to be suspicious of Stephen Ward. At a party at the Soviet Embassy, he seemed very much at home. In talking to patients he was obviously sympathetic to the Communist régime. Several thought that he was a security risk. Reports began to come into the Security Service: and also to the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, who passed them on to the Security Service. Stephen Ward got to know that he had been reported as a suspicious character. So he himself approached the Security Service—no doubt so as to get in first. On 28th May, 1962, the security officer saw him again. He was the same officer who had seen him previously. He reported that,

"more than once Ward assured me that if Ivanov ever attempted to make use of him for any illegal purpose, or if he showed any inclination to defect, he would get in touch with me immediately . . . my impression of Ward remains the same . . . he is in my opinion basically a decent fellow despite the fact that he has accepted as true much of the propaganda pumped into him by Ivanov.

I do not believe he is a Communist but there is no doubt that he holds queer opinions about Russia's aims in international affairs. I do not believe that he would wittingly be disloyal to this country but at the same time I recognise that he might well do considerable harm without intending it. One of his very obvious faults is that he talks too much."

(vii) The Foreign Office is Warned

251. The Security Service followed this up by making sure that the Foreign Office knew about Ward. On 12th June, 1962, they wrote to the Foreign Office and also saw them; and warned them that Ivanov was a member of the Russian Intelligence Service and that Ward was both naïve and indiscreet.

252. A few months later reports began to come in to the Security Service, too, about Ward's immoral activities. On 4th October, 1962, they were informed that, "From what I hear of Ward and his dealings with women and his enormous circle of friends, I strongly suspect that he is the provider of pokies for rich people."



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253. Then came the Cuban crisis. The Russians were carrying nuclear arms to Cuba and the United States were about to intercept the ships. The critical days were from Wednesday, 24th October, 1962, when the Russian ships were heading for Cuba until Sunday, 28th October, 1962, when they turned back. During this time Ward made frantic efforts at Ivanov's request, to get the United Kingdom to intervene. He wanted Her Majesty's Government to take an independent initiative and summon a summit conference.

(viii) Ward is not to be Trusted

254. By this time the Foreign Office were becoming very suspicious of Ward and asked the Security Service for information about him. On 2nd November, 1962, the security officer (the same one who had always seen Ward) told the Foreign Office that he

"has a number of titled and influential friends and patients, including several members of the Cabinet. It was this fact which led us to pay some attention to him because we felt he might acquire delicate information from them which would find its way to Ivanov. Ward is a talkative extrovert; he looks upon Ivanov as a real friend; he is also a man of few morals and is said to have provided some of his influential friends with highly satisfactory young mistresses. It is not easy to assess Ward's security reliability but we believe he is probably not a man who would be actively disloyal but that he is so under the influence of Ivanov that it would be most unwise to trust him."

255. It is quite plain to me that throughout 1962 the Security Service were keeping a close watch on the activities of Ward and Ivanov and were keeping the Foreign Office very properly informed on the matter.

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## CHAPTER XX

### THE SECURITY SERVICE IN 1963—THREE IMPORTANT DECISIONS

#### (i) 29th January, 1963—Ivanov Leaves

256. The Edgcombe shooting incident did not affect the Security Service directly: but, as I have said earlier, it was the cause of Christine Keeler going to the newspapers and selling her story, with the consequence that Ward got very worried. He saw Ivanov on 18th January, 1963, and it is reasonable to infer that he warned Ivanov that the story might "break" soon. Within a day or two Ivanov made arrangements to leave England, far earlier than expected. About 22nd January, 1963, the Security Service got to know that he was leaving on 29th January, 1963, and he in fact left on that day.

#### (ii) Mr. Profumo sees the Head of the Service

257. Meanwhile the imminent publicity had got to the ears of Mr. Profumo. In the evening of 28th January, 1963, at 5.30 p.m. Lord Astor had alerted Mr. Profumo to the danger. And immediately Mr. Profumo asked the Head of the Security Service to come and see him, and he did so at 6.45 p.m. The purpose of Mr. Profumo (as at any rate it appeared to the Head of the Security Service) was to see if he could do anything to stop publication of Christine Keeler's story in the newspapers. He gave the Director-General an account of his acquaintanceship with Ward in the course of which he had met Ivanov and Christine. He described the bathing party at Cliveden. He said that he had visited Ward's flat in Wimpole Mews on a number of occasions, generally when there had been parties there, but once or twice he had found Christine there alone. He had written little notes to her but they were harmless. He referred to the shooting incident and added that he understood that Christine was a drug addict. He said that he had been warned that the papers had got a story in which she alleged an association with him and might also bring in Ivanov's name saying that he was a Russian spy.

258. Mr. Profumo said that he remembered that, when Sir Norman Brook had cautioned him about Stephen Ward (on 9th August, 1961) Sir Norman had hinted that the Security Service might try to get Ivanov into its employment. (It occurred to the Head of the Security Service that Mr. Profumo hoped that the Security Service had Ivanov in their employ; and that they might, in the interest of security, ask the newspapers not to run the story.) The Head of the Security Service told Mr. Profumo that they had not enlisted Ivanov for their work, so Mr. Profumo did not pursue the point. But the Head of the Security Service formed the impression that Mr. Profumo's object in asking to see him was to get a D notice or something to stop publication, which was a vain hope.

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(iii) Reports first reach the Service of Mr. Profumo's Association with Christine

259. On 28th and 29th January, 1963, more reports were coming in to the Security Service (from a secret source considered reliable) about Ward and his activities. They learnt now for the first time that Mr. Profumo was said to have an association with Christine Keeler. They were told that Ward had stated that the girl had been visited several times by Mr. John Profumo and by the Russian Assistant Naval Attaché, Captain Ivanov: that Mr. Profumo subsequently had a prolonged affair with Christine Keeler and two very amorous letters signed by him had been given by her to the *Sunday Pictorial*: that the Russians were so certain that a scandal was brewing that Ivanov had been told to leave on 29th January, 1963. (The Security Service already knew that Ivanov was leaving on 29th January, 1963.) It should be noticed that Stephen Ward said on several occasions that he told the Security Service of the association as long ago as 12th July, 1961, but I am satisfied he did not tell them anything about it and they learnt it now for the first time.

(iv) 1st February, 1963—An Important Decision

260. On the morning of 1st February, 1963, these reports were considered by the Head of the Security Service with some of his senior officers: and he came to this important decision: *It was not within the proper scope of the Security Service to inquire into these matters.* These were his reasons:

- (1) He thought it was possible that Christine Keeler had been Mr. Profumo's mistress. But he did not think it was the function of the Security Service to find out whether she was his mistress or not. It was a purely personal side of his life which the Security Service were not concerned to look into.
- (2) It would be a security matter if Mr. Profumo was sharing a mistress with a Russian Naval Attaché—if it meant that there was a flow of secret information passing through her from one to the other. But Ivanov had now left the country. So any present risk had gone. And there was no reason to suppose that any information had passed from Mr. Profumo through the girl. Mr. Profumo, whatever might be his private life, was a wholly reliable Secretary of State for War and it was not to be supposed that he had given away secret information. The only security point was the possible leakage of information through Stephen Ward to Ivanov. As to this, Mr. Profumo had been warned by Sir Norman Brook and there was no reason to think that he had not heeded the warning.

261. So on 1st February, 1963, the Head of the Security Service gave this important ruling:

"Until further notice no approach should be made to anyone in the Ward galère, or to any other outside contact in respect of it. If we are approached, we listen only."

(v) A Call at Admiralty House

262. In the evening of 1st February, 1963, there was an important call from Admiralty House to the Security Service. The Director-General had already left, so the Deputy Director-General went round. The Prime Minister's

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Principal Private Secretary told him of a call by a senior newspaper executive who had said that a story had been sold by a girl to a newspaper and it would include passages in which she was involved with Mr. Profumo and in which the Russian Assistant Naval Attaché also figured. The Deputy Director-General said it was recognisably the same story as they already had: and it was agreed that the first step was to see Mr. Profumo and see if there was any truth in it. The Private Secretary said he would tell the Chief Whip and the Prime Minister. (Full details are given in Chapter VIII, paragraphs 126-127.)

263. It is to be noted that the object of the Prime Minister's Private Secretary was simply to tell the Security Service about the call of the newspaper executive and to get any information which might be useful for him (the Private Secretary) to report to the Prime Minister. His object was *not* to ask the Security Service for a report as some might think from what the Prime Minister said in the House of Commons on 17th June, 1963 (Hansard, col. 56). The Security Service did not understand that they were to make a report. Nor indeed that anything more was required of them at that stage.

(vi) 4th February, 1963—Another Important Decision

264. Meanwhile one of the officers of the Security Service had prepared a minute which came before the Head of the Security Service on 4th February, 1963. It is filled, as he told me, with prophetic insight. It is of much importance and I set it out in full:

"If a scandal results from Mr. Profumo's association with Christine Keeler, there is likely to be a considerable political rumpus in the present climate produced by the Radcliffe Tribunal. If in any subsequent inquiries we were found to have been in possession of this information about Profumo and to have taken no action on it, we would, I am sure, be subject to much criticism for failing to bring it to light. I suggest that this information be passed to the Prime Minister and you might also like to consider whether or not, before doing so, we should interview Miss Keeler."

265. The Head of the Security Service considered this minute and discussed it too with his Deputy. They appreciated the point that if a scandal results from Christine Keeler's association with Mr. Profumo there is likely to be a considerable political rumpus—but they thought that that was essentially a political matter which was now in the hands of the politicians and not the concern of the Security Service. They knew that Admiralty House were in possession of the story and had decided to confront Mr. Profumo with it. The Head of the Security Service felt that the action which the officer was suggesting was leading them outside the proper function of the Security Service and that he ought to pull him back a bit. So he issued a firm instruction not to go into it:

"The allegations there referred to are known to Admiralty House. No inquiries on this subject should be made by us."

Thus the important decision was made that the Security Service should not pursue any investigation in the matter. In particular they should not interview Christine Keeler.

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(vii) 7th February, 1963—A Third Important Decision

266. On 7th February, 1963, the Commander of Special Branch went to see the Security Service with the report of the Marylebone officers of 5th February, 1963. This report showed that the police had been told by Christine Keeler on 26th January that there was an illicit association between herself and Mr. Profumo, that she had met Captain Ivanov on a number of occasions, and that Stephen Ward had asked her to discover from Mr. Profumo the date on which atomic secrets were to be handed to Western Germany. Further, that the police had also been told a good deal by Stephen Ward on 5th February. (The statements are set out in full in Chapter VI, paragraphs 80 and 87.) The matter was discussed by the Commander of Special Branch with a senior officer of the Security Service (who had been at the previous discussions and who knew of the decision that had been made). They decided that there was no security interest involved such as to warrant any further steps being taken. The papers were put before the Deputy Director-General, who agreed with the decision and wrote this minute:

"No action on this at present. Please keep me informed of any developments."

(viii) Did the Security Service Err?

267. That decision was of crucial importance: for it meant that the important statements of 26th January and 5th February, 1963, never got any further. They never got to the Prime Minister or the Prime Minister's Private Secretary or to any Minister until 29th May, 1963. The Home Secretary had some information on 27th March, 1963, which I have mentioned in paragraph 196. The question is whether the Security Service erred in not putting them forward. Upon this point I would set out these matters for consideration.

- (1) The Security Service were not greatly impressed by Christine's statement about Ward's request for information about atomic bombs. There was no suggestion that Christine Keeler had complied with the request, or that Mr. Profumo had ever given her any such information. The only security interest would be a possible charge against Stephen Ward under Section 7 of the Official Secrets Act, 1920, for endeavouring to persuade Christine Keeler to commit an offence against the Act. But such a charge would be dependent on Christine Keeler's testimony and it was very doubtful whether this was sufficiently trustworthy to warrant a prosecution.
- (2) There was at this point (7th February, 1963) no security risk. By this time Captain Ivanov had left the country. They had no reason to doubt the loyalty of Mr. Profumo. True it is they might have their doubts as to his moral behaviour—for he might have had an illicit association with Christine Keeler—but that was not a matter for them to report. It might have political implications but it had no longer any security interest. It might have been desirable to warn the Prime Minister about it, had he not known of it. But Admiralty House knew of it. So did the Chief Whip. And Mr. Profumo had been seen. They had not been told the result. Nor had they been asked for a report.

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(3) The Security Service had been told in clear terms in the Directive of 26th September, 1952, that their task was the Defence of the Realm as a whole, that they were strictly to limit their work to this task, and that no enquiry was to be carried out on behalf of any Government Department unless they were satisfied that an important public interest was at stake, bearing on the Defence of the Realm as a whole (see paragraph 238).

268. I think that Directive explains the three important decisions of the Security Service at this juncture. The Directive is imperative that they are not to meddle with anything which is not clearly and specifically their business as a security matter: and having come to the conclusion, as they did, that there was no security risk involved, they did not think it right to pursue the matter further. I cannot blame them for this decision. The one point of difficulty is whether, having been sent for to Admiralty House on 1st February, they ought not to have followed it up by their going on their own initiative to Admiralty House on 7th February when they received the police report: the Lord Chancellor in his inquiry held that they should have done, and in failing to do so, they had committed an error of judgment. But he did not have the Directive before him, and having regard to the strict terms of the Directive I would not myself find them at fault in not going to Admiralty House.

(ix) An Unprecedented Situation

269. Nevertheless the fact remains that the police reports of 26th January and 5th February, 1963, did not reach any Minister until 29th May, 1963: and it has been suggested that they should have done. If the Security Service is not to blame, who is to blame?

270. I think the explanation is that this was an unprecedented situation for which the machinery of government did not cater. It was, in the view of the Security Service, not a case of a security risk, but of moral misbehaviour by a Minister. And we have no machinery to deal with it.

(x) Subsequent Events

271. After the three important decisions of 1st, 4th and 7th February, 1963, the Security Service took no further part for some time. On 27th March, 1963, the Home Secretary asked the Head of the Security Service to come and see him. He wanted to be put into the picture. The Head of the Security Service gave him a full report: and followed it up by considering whether there was any ground for prosecuting Stephen Ward under the Official Secrets Act (paragraph 196). Then when the Security issue was raised by Mr. Wilson, the Security Service reported fully to the Prime Minister (paragraphs 210-213).

272. This concludes the operation of the Security Service in this affair. I find that they covered the security interest fully throughout and reported to those concerned. Their principal interest was in Captain Ivanov, the Russian Intelligence Officer: and secondarily in Stephen Ward, as a close friend of his. They took all reasonable steps to see that the interests of the country were defended. In particular they saw that Mr. Profumo and another Minister were warned of Ward. They kept the Foreign Office fully informed. There is no reason to believe that there was any security leakage whatever.

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## CHAPTER XXI

### ADEQUACY OF CO-OPERATION

273. No one can understand the nature of the co-operation between the Security Service and the police forces unless he realises:

- (1) The Security Service in this country is not established by Statute nor is it recognised by Common Law. Even the Official Secrets Acts do not acknowledge its existence. The members of the Service are, in the eye of the law, ordinary citizens with no powers greater than anyone else. They have no special powers of arrest such as the police have. No special powers of search are given to them. They cannot enter premises without the consent of the householder, even though they may suspect a spy is there. If a spy is fleeing the country, they cannot tap him on the shoulder and say he is not to go. They have, in short, no executive powers. They have managed very well without them. We would rather have it so, than have anything in the nature of a "secret police".
- (2) The Security Service in this country is comparatively small in numbers. In some other countries there is to be found a massive organisation with representatives dispersed throughout the land. Whereas in this country it is and remains a relatively small professional organisation charged with the task of countering espionage, subversion and sabotage.
- (3) Those absences (they are not deficiencies)—the absence of powers and the absence of numbers—are made up for by the close co-operation of the Security Service and the police forces. In particular, in London, with the "Special Branch" of the Metropolitan Police and in the country with the Chief Constables. If an arrest is to be made, it is done by the police. If a search warrant is sought, it is granted to a constable. The police alone are entrusted with executive power.

274. I have had evidence which satisfies me that there is excellent co-operation between the Security Service and the police forces. For instance, I have been present at the final stage of a combined operation by which a Soviet intelligence officer was tracked on a journey across the country and his every movement was covered. And I have seen the close collaboration which goes on when a case of espionage is suspected. The Security Service makes all the initial investigations, relying on its technical resources and specialised field force. But as soon as an arrest is possible, the police are called into consultation and from this point onwards both forces work as a team. This is absolutely essential at the crucial stage (e.g., when a secret document is handed over by a collaborator to a spy) and an arrest is imminent. Precision of timing is everything. The arrest is made by the police and thereafter the case for the prosecution is in their hands. The two organisations work in the closest co-operation until the trial is over. During the hearing the Security Service tries to remain in the background. This is to keep their officers anonymous and their techniques secret. The recent notorious 'spy cases' show no lack of co-operation; and should be

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regarded as an outstanding achievement, rather than as a ground for criticism.

275. Inasmuch as most cases take place in the metropolis, the Security Service, in their co-operation with the police, work mostly with the Special Branch: but in the country, there is excellent co-operation also.

276. Turning to the present case, it affords a good illustration of how well the forces co-operate.

- (1) On 31st July, 1961, when the Security Service wished to know something of Stephen Ward's activities, they sought the aid of Special Branch.
- (2) In April, 1962, when Special Branch received reports that Stephen Ward was sympathetic to Communism, they passed them to the Security Service.
- (3) As soon as reports came in of the Edgecombe shooting on 15th December, 1962, Special Branch informed the Security Service.
- (4) As soon as Detective-Sergeant Burrows of the Metropolitan Police got Christine Keeler's statement on 26th January, 1963, Special Branch were informed. There was an unfortunate failure to co-ordinate within the police force (see paragraph 85). But on 7th February, 1963 (as soon as the 5th February report was received), Special Branch went to the Security Service with the report and they agreed together on what was to be done. The decision may have been right or wrong, but there was no failure in co-operation.

277. The degree of co-operation which is essential between the two services seems to be a further reason why the ministerial responsibility should be in one Minister, namely, the Home Secretary.



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**PART III**

**WHERE LIES THE RESPONSIBILITY?**

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CHAPTER XXII

THE PRESS, THE POLICE AND THE SECURITY SERVICE

278. At the close of these two Parts, the question must be asked: Where lies the responsibility for what occurred?

279. The *primary* responsibility must, of course, rest with Mr. Profumo: First, by associating with Christine Keeler as he did: Secondly, and worse, by telling lies about it to colleagues and deceiving them: Thirdly, and gravest, by the falsity of his solemn statement to the House of Commons.

280. But there is a question as to the *secondary* responsibility. Ought the Security Service to have reported to a Minister the information they had on 7th February, 1963? Or the police to have reported their information, particularly the statements of Christine Keeler on 26th January, and 4th and 5th April, 1963? Lastly, ought the *Sunday Pictorial* to have disclosed the 'Darling' letter? Or the story that Christine Keeler had told them? It may very well be that if any such material had been placed before the Prime Minister or the Home Secretary, or indeed any Minister, Mr. Profumo would not have succeeded in deceiving them. The Ministers would not have accepted his assurances. He would have resigned earlier and never made his personal statement. Let me take these in the reverse order.

(i) The Newspaper

281. It is noteworthy that the senior executive of another newspaper did go to Admiralty House on 1st February, 1963, and gave them information on the ground that it was a security matter. It may be asked: Ought not the newspaper itself to have done so, the newspaper which actually held the 'Darling' letter and had Christine's story? They were under no legal duty, of course, but was it not their public duty? If the information had disclosed a present and grave risk, affecting the very security of the country, no one would doubt that it would have been their duty to tell those in authority. So also if it pointed clearly to a Minister being, at the present time, a security risk, it might well have been their duty. But the case does not come as high as that. The 'Darling' letter was, as the newspaper said, "effusive, but not conclusive". They were not even sure it was genuine. And they did not know how far Christine Keeler was trustworthy. Stephen Ward had told them that what she was saying about Mr. Profumo was quite untrue. In any case it was 18 months ago. It was a story to be told, not a danger to be averted. That is, if the story could properly be published at all. As it was, they decided not to publish it. They changed the policy of the paper and decided not to publish that type of story. I do not think the newspaper was in any way at fault in keeping the story and the letter to themselves, as they did, until after Mr. Profumo resigned. After all, many knew the letter existed. No one ever asked to see it.

(ii) The Police

282. It was unfortunate that the police did not take a full statement from Christine Keeler on 1st February, 1963, as arranged, or a day or two later. It might have led to further inquiries and brought everything to a head.

earlier. It might, for instance, have led to an earlier prosecution of Ward and an earlier discovery of the truth about Mr. Profumo. This was due to a failure in co-ordination for which no one individual was to blame (paragraph 85). But save for this failure the police fulfilled their responsibilities. The substance of Christine Keeler's story was passed on to the Security Service on 7th February, 1963, and thenceforward the responsibility passed to the Security Service. The police did eventually take a statement from Christine Keeler on 4th and 5th April, 1963 (while they were inquiring into the case against Ward). This disclosed further details of moral misbehaviour by a Minister, but added nothing on the security issue. And it was not their duty to disclose a moral misbehaviour. The police are not to report upon private lives, even of Ministers. In any case the substance of the story had been passed to the Security Service as long ago as 7th February, 1963.

(iii) The Security Service

283. I have already considered in detail their position. I need only repeat that they work under a strict directive to confine themselves to danger to the Realm as a whole. Once they came to the conclusion that there was no security interest in the matter, but only moral misbehaviour in a Minister, they were under no duty to report it to anyone. They did come to that conclusion. They came to it honestly and reasonably and I do not think they should be found at fault.

Was no one to Blame?

If it be asked, why then, was no one to blame except Mr. Profumo my answer is that none of the governmental services was to blame. As I have said before, this was an unprecedented situation for which the machinery of government did not cater (paragraph 270). We are, I suggest rightly, so anxious that neither the police nor the Security Service should pry into private lives, that there is no machinery for reporting the moral misbehaviour of Ministers. Certainly the police must not go out to seek information about it. Nor must the Security Service. But even if it comes incidentally to their knowledge, as it did here, there is no machinery laid down for reporting it. It is perhaps better thus, than that we should have a 'police state'. If that be so, then when a Minister is guilty of moral misbehaviour and it gives rise to scandalous rumour, it is for him and his colleagues to deal with the rumour, as best they can. It is their responsibility and no one else's.

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## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE MINISTERS

284. This leaves only the *Ministers*. What is their responsibility, if any? The case is reduced to this: there were persistent rumours about Mr. Profumo, the crux of which was that he had an *immoral* association with Christine Keeler. The Ministers knew that this was crux of the matter, for it was the point on which they concentrated their attention. If these rumours were affecting the confidence which Parliament reposed in Mr. Profumo or the Government, then it was for the Prime Minister and his colleagues to deal with them. The Prime Minister did not himself see Mr. Profumo but he left it to the Chief Whip and the Law Officers. These Ministers inquired of Mr. Profumo whether there was any impropriety in his association with Christine Keeler. He repeatedly assured them that there was no impropriety, and in the end they were satisfied that he was telling the truth. And, on being told by them, the Prime Minister was satisfied too. All were clearly acting with the utmost honesty and good faith: their integrity is beyond question.

285. Nevertheless, there are two matters which Parliament may wish to consider further:

- (a) Did the Ministers ask themselves the proper question? They concentrated their attention on the matter of immorality. And the one question they asked themselves was whether Mr. Profumo had *in fact* committed adultery: whereas the proper question may have been: was his conduct, proved or admitted, such as to lead ordinary people *reasonably to believe* that he had committed adultery? If that were the proper question the answer was clear. His conduct was such as to lead to that belief. And no further inquiries would help. (See generally paragraph 181 (5).)
- (b) Ought further inquiries to have been made? The Ministers did not know of the statements made to the police and could hardly be expected to ask for them. But they did know of the 'Darling' letter. It was possible. I should have thought, for them to ask the newspaper to let them see it, or, better still, to get Mr. Profumo to ask them. After all, it was his copyright. Whether the newspaper would have complied, we do not know. They were never asked. If the Ministers had seen it, it might have turned the scale between belief and disbelief of Mr. Profumo's word. At any rate, there would seem to be a considerable risk in accepting his word, without knowing what the letter contained.

286. Those are questions which I would not seek to answer. They are matters for Parliament and not for me. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the conduct of Mr. Profumo was such as to create, amongst an influential section of the people, a *reasonable belief* that he had committed adultery with such a woman in such circumstances as the case discloses. It was the responsibility of the Prime Minister and his colleagues, and of them only, to deal with this situation: and they did not succeed in doing so.

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PART IV

RUMOURS AFFECTING THE HONOUR AND  
INTEGRITY OF PUBLIC LIFE

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292. So I had to ask myself, whether I was to inquire into those rumours which arose thus *indirectly* out of the Profumo Affair. And I decided, after anxious consideration, that I should. If these rumours were affecting the honour and integrity of public life in this country, and were unfounded, ~~it~~ it my duty to inquire into them and show them to be so. Whereas if they were well-founded, and affected our national security, the truth should ~~not be hidden~~. Only in this way could the confidence of the public be restored. Some of those who appeared before me objected to my investigating rumours of this kind. They said they were irrelevant. But, rightly or wrongly, I held the contrary. I have investigated them.

293. Even so, there were serious questions to solve on the second condition.

(ii) What is a Security Risk?

294. All the rumours reported to me were to the effect that a Minister or person prominent in public life had been guilty of immorality or discreditable conduct of some kind or other. But it is not every piece of immorality or discreditable conduct which can be said to be a "security risk". In my opinion immorality or discreditable conduct is only a security risk if it is committed in such circumstances that it might expose the person concerned to blackmail or to undue pressures which might lead him to give away secret information. For instance, I would normally regard homosexual behaviour, or perverted practices with a prostitute, as creating a security risk, at any rate if it was of recent date. Again I would not ordinarily regard adultery as a security risk, at any rate when committed clandestinely with a person who was not likely to resort to blackmail. Much must depend, however, on the circumstances. The *Vassall Case* showed how photographs may be taken of persons in compromising situations. The existence of such photographs heightens the security risk: So also do compromising letters. They would be a most potent weapon in the hands of a blackmailer, even after several years. Yet again, to pervert, or to attempt to pervert, the course of justice might well be a security risk. The participants would be under extreme pressure to keep it quiet. In short every case of immorality or discreditable conduct must depend on its own special circumstances, and not least on the length of time past since it happened, and the likelihood of undue pressure being exerted. Hence the need to investigate the particular circumstances of every case reported to me, and this I have done.

(iii) Where Lies the Burden of Proof?

295. This raised an important issue: for there was quite a body of opinion to the effect that, where there is a persistent rumour about a Minister which, if believed, would mean that he was a security risk, it must, as a matter of political necessity, be disproved or he must be asked to resign. An analogy was drawn with the Civil Service where a man may be removed from secret duties "because after the fullest investigation, ~~doubt~~ about his reliability remain, even although nothing may have been proved against him on standards which would be accepted in a court of law". (See the Statement on the Findings of the Privy Councillors on Security (1956) Cmd. 9713.)

296. Whilst I appreciate the political significance of the ~~opinion~~ opinion so expressed, I have felt unable to adopt it for the purposes of my Inquiry. It

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## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY

287. I now turn to the third part of my terms of reference. You asked me "to investigate any information or material which may come to (my) attention in this connection (The Profumo affair) and to consider any evidence there may be for believing that national security has been, or may be, endangered".

288. In announcing the terms of reference to the House of Commons on 17th June, 1963, you said "It will be within the knowledge of many Hon. Members that in connection with the recent episode, rumours are circulating which affect the honour and integrity of public life in this country and, if they were true, might point to a security risk. Such a situation cannot be tolerated."

289. I have felt some concern at the scope of this part of my Inquiry. There have been many rumours lately concerning the honour and integrity of public life in this country, and I infer from your statement in Parliament that you envisage that some of them might come within the scope of my Inquiry.

290. How far ought I to inquire into rumours? As I interpret my terms of reference I must inquire into them when two conditions are satisfied:

- (a) The rumours must arise out of the circumstances leading to the resignation of the former Secretary of State for War, Mr. J. D. Profumo; or, more shortly, they must arise out of "The Profumo affair".
- (b) The rumours must be such that, if true, they may give rise to the belief that national security has been or may be endangered; or, more shortly, that they point to a "security risk".

#### (i) When do Rumours "Arise out of" the Profumo Affair?

291. So interpreted, however, there is yet another question to solve on the first condition; when can a rumour be said to arise out of the Profumo affair? Some of the rumours gave rise to no difficulty, such as a rumour that a Minister was associating with Christine Keeler or one of the Ward girls, or a rumour which was traced to statements made by those girls to the newspapers. Those rumours arose *directly* out of the Profumo affair and no one has doubted that it is within my terms of reference to inquire into them. But there were other rumours which arose *indirectly* out of the Profumo affair, in this sense, that they would probably never have seen the light of day, or at least never have received credence, were it not for the Profumo affair. The admission of Mr. Profumo that he had lied to the House of Commons so *shook* the confidence of the people of this country that they were ready to believe rumours which previously they would have rejected out of hand. No *single* was the denial of a Minister to be accepted. The word of any informer, however bad his character, might be preferred to the word of a Minister. And *infamously* abounded. They saw a chance of making money by telling their stories to the newspapers as Christine Keeler did. Hence rumours spread.

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seems to me to be most unfair to the Minister concerned. It means that, ~~once~~ he is the subject of rumour, it puts on him the burden of proving his innocence—a thing difficult enough for any man to do—and ~~entirely~~ contrary to what we believe to be just. It is bad enough to require anyone to meet a charge based on rumour—a charge in which there is no prosecutor, of which there are no particulars, where the witnesses speak often enough from hearsay, and when they cannot be cross-examined. It would be worse still if the individual affected had to *disprove* a rumour when there is no evidence against him.

297. In these circumstances I have adopted this test: If there comes to my attention information or material which points to a security risk, I have to consider it to see whether it is of sufficient significance to call for an answer. If it is, I must call upon the person affected to hear what he has to say. Then, having heard him, I must consider whether, in the result, it can properly be said there is *evidence* for believing that national security has been, or may be, endangered. In short, is there evidence which, sitting as a judge, I would think it fit to leave to a jury?

#### (iv) Contents of this Part of the Report

298. I have endeavoured to investigate all the rumours reported to me in accordance with those principles. And I have to report that in no case have I found any evidence for believing that national security has been or may be endangered. I would like to have stopped there, but I feel that, if I did, I would lay myself open to the charge of covering up the truth; and there would be a danger that, in the absence of detailed refutation, the rumours would persist. I have therefore in the succeeding paragraphs set out the course of my investigations. But I have deliberately refrained from setting out suspicions which fall short of evidence, or immorality or discreditable conduct which does not amount to a security risk; for if I were to do so, it seems to me that my Inquiry would be turned into a witch-hunt, parallel to the McCarthy Committee in the United States, where people would be condemned for past sins, which are better forgotten and forgiven. I feel that such an inquiry into private lives would be repugnant to the great majority of our people.

299. I turn therefore to consider the rumours in detail. In doing so, I have refrained from setting down the names of the persons affected by the rumours: this should cause no difficulty. Those who have heard the rumours or repeated them, will readily be able to identify the persons from my description, and will, I hope, read the refutation. Those who have not heard the rumours are better off. They need read nothing.

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## CHAPTER XXV

### RUMOURS ARISING DIRECTLY OUT OF THE PROFUMO AFFAIR

300. These rumours usually sprang from the fact that Stephen Ward met a large number of persons prominent in public life. He met some at Cliveden, some in the course of his practice as an osteopath (where he had a high reputation for skill) and some in the course of drawing portraits of people. Although he only met them thus casually, he used afterwards in his conversation to let fall their names as if they were close friends. The young girls whom he had about him were flattered to be in the company of one so well connected. And when they afterwards told their stories to the newspapers the names were a good selling point.

301. There was a heavy crop of rumours immediately preceding my inquiry. On 18th June, 1963, a French newspaper published a long article, purporting to be from London headed "Tous les familiers de la Piscine du Docteur Ward ne sont pas encore dans le bain" (All the frequenters of Dr. Ward's swimming pool have not yet been ducked in the water). In the article the newspaper set out, with added spice, many of the rumours then current. The newspaper is distributed in Great Britain and its contents became known. Immediately after I began my inquiry I wrote to the Managing Director and asked for the grounds on which the article was based and to be put in touch with his London correspondent. But I have received no reply. I do not wish to attach any special importance to this mischievous article but it contains such a convenient tabulation of the rumours that I quote extracts from it.

#### (i) The "Appalling Allegation"

302. This French newspaper accused the Prime Minister and another Minister (who was named) of a political offence, namely, "d'étouffer l'affaire Keeler"—(i.e., to stifle the Keeler affair). This accusation was quite unfounded. But that is not the point. When the newspaper got to England some persons reading it (presumably their French was imperfect) said there was an "appalling allegation" against the named Minister. The hearers interpreted this sexually, as they usually do, and said that the Minister was guilty of indecency with little boys. Hence the rumour. It was a fantastic suggestion, as anyone who knows the Minister will appreciate. And it was of course completely unfounded. It just shows how rumours arise.

#### (ii) Negotiations for a Cottage

303. This French newspaper said of another Minister "Il n'est en tout cas aucun doute que (the Minister) était en relations très suivies avec le Dr. Ward et sa troupe de girls". (i.e., There is no doubt at all that Mr. .... had very close relations with Dr. Ward and his pack of girls.) This is entirely without foundation. The only connection of this Minister with Stephen Ward was as follows.

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304. In March, 1962, the Minister and his wife stayed the week-end at Cliveden with Lord Astor. On this occasion they met Stephen Ward. He came to a luncheon party at the house. He had some conversation with the Minister and his wife on portraits and so forth and left about half an hour after luncheon.

305. On this week-end, during a walk in the grounds, Lord Astor pointed out to the Minister a cottage, called Ferry Cottage, on the estate which, he suggested, the Minister might care to take on lease from the National Trust. At that time the cottage was derelict, with no lavatory or kitchen. The Minister thought it might be made into a suitable place for himself and his family for holidays: and over the next year he took steps to get a lease of it and do it up. They got builders to do work on it. During that year, 1962, he and his wife and family went to the cottage three or four times to see its progress and they had picnics outside; but they did not stay. On one of the occasions the Minister happened to pass Stephen Ward with three girls and said good-day to them, but had no conversation with them. In February, 1963, the Minister and his wife moved in some furniture preparatory to moving in. On 3rd March, 1963, they went with the children and had a picnic in the snow outside. They never slept there.

306. Stephen Ward's cottage was about 400 yards away from Ferry Cottage for which the Minister was negotiating. In March, 1963, the Minister heard reports which made him decide not to go on with the negotiations. He terminated them at the beginning of April, 1963.

307. That is the whole of any conversation or connection whatever which the Minister had with Stephen Ward, and neither the Minister nor his wife has ever been in Ward's cottage at Cliveden, nor his house in London.

308. Out of that wholly innocent incident the rumour about this Minister has arisen. There is not a shred of evidence to support it.

### (iii) The Borrowed Car

309. In March, 1963, there was a rumour that another Minister had lent Mr. Profumo his car knowingly for the very purpose that Mr. Profumo might take Christine Keeler for drives in it. This in turn got elaborated into a rumour that the Minister himself had taken Christine for drives in it in Richmond Park. When printed in the French newspaper the rumour got to the most extravagant lengths. "La prochaine vedette sera certainement . . . qui a fourni à Miss Keeler les somptueuses voitures avec lesquelles elle se rendait en compagnie de Profumo à 'd'honorables parties de campagne'. Selon les personnes bien informées . . . aurait été l'organisateur des orgies qui se déroulaient dans le pavillon de chasse du Dr. Ward. Il n'était pas seulement le spectateur passif des spectacles et des démonstrations de nudisme dans la piscine de Ward dont Profumo était particulièrement friand." (The next victim would certainly be Mr. . . . who provided Miss Keeler with luxurious motor cars in which she went in company with Profumo to 'country week-ends'. According to well-informed persons, Mr. . . . was the organiser of the orgies which took place in Dr. Ward's country cottage. He was not only a passive spectator of these sights and of the displays of nudism which took place in Ward's swimming pool, of which Profumo was particularly fond.)

310. These rumours are entirely without foundation: The true facts on this matter are these: During a week-end in July, 1961 (probably 16th July, 1961) Mr. Profumo borrowed the Minister's black Bentley car which had a mascot on it which identifies it. The reason for borrowing it was because Mrs. Profumo had gone to the country in their own car. The Minister was not using his car that week-end as he was going (as he often did) to his constituency by train; and Mr. Profumo asked if he could borrow it, as he had to be in London. The Minister let him have the keys of the car and thought no more about it. Mr. Profumo did not tell the Minister the purpose for which he was going to use it. He did in fact use it to take Christine Keeler for a drive or two in London. He pointed out to her the mascot on it and told her that the car belonged to the Minister. He returned the car on the Sunday night. This was the only occasion on which he took out Christine Keeler in the Minister's car. The Minister had no knowledge that Mr. Profumo used his car for this purpose. He had no idea whatever that Mr. Profumo borrowed the car so as to take Christine or any other girl out in it.

311. The whole incident was so unimportant to the Minister that it faded completely from his mind. Nearly two years later, when Christine Keeler gave her story to the newspapers, she actually told them that Mr. Profumo had driven her out in a car which had this particular mascot on the bonnet. This showed it was the Minister's car. The newspaper believed her story. When it was put to the Minister (as it was on 2nd April, 1963) he said there was no truth in it. This was a most unfortunate mistake on his part. I am satisfied, however, that it was an entirely innocent mistake: he had simply forgotten that he had lent the car. As soon as he was reminded of it (as he was by Mr. Profumo on 6th June, 1963) he corrected it and acknowledged that he had made a mistake.

312. I am satisfied that these rumours were entirely without foundation. All that happened was that the Minister quite innocently lent his car to Mr. Profumo for one week-end not knowing the purpose for which it was to be used.

#### (iv) The Cup of Tea

313. In this same French newspaper, the names of two other Ministers were mentioned, as if they were in the Ward orbit. "Des membres du cabinet comme MM. . . . et . . . y venaient volontiers prendre une tasse de thé. . . . Or voici qu'on raconte que les conversations mondaines . . . avaient leur prolongement dans les appartements de Ward. Mais on y tenait évidemment un tout autre langage et l'on s'y ennuyait beaucoup moins." (Such Cabinet Ministers as Mr. . . . and Mr. . . . are glad to go there for a cup of tea. . . . It is said, however, that the social conversations . . . are carried further in Ward's flat. Obviously a quite different language is spoken there and one which is less boring.) These rumours have never got into circulation in England—they were too obviously preposterous—and I need not dwell upon them.

#### (v) The Spaniard's Photograph

314. I turn now to yet another Minister (whose name did not appear in the French newspaper) but about whom the following rumours circulated which arose directly out of the Profumo affair.

315. In June, 1963, it was rumoured that the Minister was involved with the Ward girls. I can see how this rumour arose. On Sunday, 19th May, 1960, the Minister was a guest of Lord Astor at Cliveden. During that time Stephen Ward came up to the house and gave him and other guests some osteopathic treatment. Stephen Ward asked if he could draw a picture of him. The Minister said he could. On 22nd June, 1960, Ward went to his house and drew his picture. That was the whole extent of the Minister's acquaintanceship with Stephen Ward. He never went to Ward's house or met any of the girls. But it appears that Stephen Ward thereafter mentioned his name frequently as if he were a close friend of his. Hence people assumed that the Minister was involved with the girls. I am satisfied that there is no foundation in this rumour whatever.

316. In connection with this rumour, a more detailed rumour arose: about the middle of June, 1963, it was rumoured that there was in existence a photograph of the Minister in the company of Christine Keeler which was in the possession of a Spanish refugee who worked part-time as a photographer in the night club "L'Hirondelle" in Swallow Street.

317. I was able to prove that this rumour was completely untrue. It is an excellent illustration of how rumours arise and spread. There is a photographer who is a Spanish refugee, and a few years back he did take photographs in a restaurant then called the Lido, but now "L'Hirondelle", in Swallow Street. In April, 1958, the manager thought that one of the customers in his restaurant was this Minister, and asked the photographer to take a photograph of him. The photograph was taken without the customer being aware of it. But the photographer did not think it fair to take a prominent man unawares, so he did not make copies of it, but he kept the film. When the rumours became current (that the Minister was involved with the Ward girls) the photographer may have mentioned, and probably did, to two or three people that he had a photograph of the Minister with a girl. This went around, and soon it was assumed that the photograph was of the Minister and Christine Keeler.

318. The photographer at my request searched through all his films and found the film of this photograph and has produced a print to me. It is plain that the man in it is not this Minister, or indeed any Minister. To anyone who knows the Minister it is obvious that it is not he. The manager and the photographer were completely mistaken in thinking it was.

(vi) "The Man in the Mask"

319. Early in June, 1963, a rumour spread through Fleet Street and thence through the House of Commons that a certain Minister was the "man in the mask". It is clear to me that this rumour was the direct result of statements made by Christine Keeler and by Marilyn Rice-Davies. The statement by Christine Keeler was contained in the story told by her to the Press (from which I have quoted an extract in paragraph 66). It was also made by her and Marilyn Rice-Davies on 8th February, 1963. This is what she said:

"The more rich and influential people I met the more amazed I was at their private lives. Names who are household words take part in the

most obscene things. One night I was invited to a dinner party at the home of a very, very rich man. After I arrived, I discovered it was a rather unusual dinner party. All the guests had taken off their clothes. There were both men and women there and the men included people I would not have suspected of ever doing anything improper. There was one well-known barrister who, I am sure, would be willing to make stirring speeches in court attacking that sort of thing. There were also some well-known actors and a politician whom I recognised. The most intriguing person, however, was a man with a black mask over his face. At first I thought this was just a party gimmick. But the truth was that this man is so well-known and holds such a responsible position that he did not want to be associated with anything improper. And I can assure you that party was improper. The guests were not just ardent nudists. Even I was disgusted."

320. This was the story as told by Marilyn Rice-Davies to the police and signed by her on 14th June, 1963:

"About six people have told me that (naming a Minister) indulges in weird sexual practices and has been to (naming the host's) parties where he wore a mask. Stephen has told me this and other girls whose names I cannot remember and it is common talk among Fleet Street reporters."

321. This story found its way into newspapers in this country and also in countries abroad where it was said that a prominent public figure was the man in the mask.

322. There is a great deal of evidence which satisfied me that there is a group of people who hold parties in private of a perverted nature. At some of these parties, the man who serves the dinner is nearly naked except for a small square lace apron round his waist such as a waitress might wear. He wears a black mask over his head with slits for eye-holes. He cannot therefore be recognised by any of the guests. Some reports stop there and say that nothing evil takes place. It is done as a comic turn and no more. This may well be so at some of the parties. But at others I am satisfied that it is followed by perverted sex orgies; that the man in the mask is a "slave" who is whipped: that the guests undress and indulge in sexual intercourse one with the other: and indulge in other sexual activities of a vile and revolting nature.

323. My only concern in my inquiry was to see whether any Minister or other person prominent in public life was present at these parties; for, if he were, he would, I should think, be exposing himself to blackmail. I enquired closely therefore into the matter. In particular I endeavoured to find who was present.

324. Stephen Ward was undoubtedly present at some of these parties. On one occasion there seems to have been more men than women, and he telephoned the two girls, Christine Keeler and Marilyn Rice-Davies, and asked them to come. They came in towards the end of the party. Stephen Ward told them about the man in the mask and asked one of them "Guess who it is? It is Mr. . . ." Ward seems to have got hold of the mask afterwards and given it to another girl who tells me she still has it—a black

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leather mask with slits which laces up at the back—and he told her that it was Mr. . . . who wore it. I asked Stephen Ward about this. He admitted he had been present at the party, but said that no one prominent had been there. He denied that he said it was the Minister. He said he had never even seen him. But he admitted that he might have said in fun "I even heard it was Mr. . . . the other day". The story soon got elaborated. One of the girls told another that there was a photograph of this Minister with the mask on and nothing else, and a little card saying "If my services don't please you, whip me". Soon it was said that one of the newspapers had the photograph. All I would say is that I have made the closest inquiries to see if there is such a photograph, and there is none. At any rate no one admits having one or having seen one. I have appealed for any photographs or other material to be produced. No one has come forward to produce any.

325. I am satisfied that the events I have described are the origin of the rumour that this Minister was the man in the mask. It is wholly hearsay derived from Stephen Ward. He is so untrustworthy an origin—so given to dropping names—that no one should give any credence to any report emanating from him. But I would not wish to leave this matter merely by saying that the rumour was not proved against this Minister. There was much to disprove it. I have seen quite a number of those who were at these parties. Some of them were astonishingly frank about the goings-on. One of them in particular, a solicitor, impressed me by his truthfulness. He told me the names of many present. They did not include any Minister or any person prominent in public life. The host and hostess and the solicitor identified for me the man in the mask: and this man actually came and gave evidence before me. He is now grievously ashamed of what he did. He does not bear any resemblance whatever to the Minister who was the victim of rumour.

326. Apart from hearsay, there was not a shred of evidence adduced before me that the man in the mask was the Minister named, and the rumour was disproved as far as it was humanly possible to disprove it, by producing the people who organised these parties and some of those who attended them. I reject it therefore as utterly unfounded.

327. I cannot leave this rumour, however, without mentioning that some of the newspapers believed it because of an earlier rumour they had heard about this Minister. It was rumoured that in 1957 he had been involved in an improper incident in Shepherd's Market, about a man who, being chased by a policeman, hurriedly left a house by foot, leaving his car behind. It was rumoured that it was the Minister's car and that he took the precaution of contacting Scotland Yard, announcing his identity, and giving notification that his car had been stolen. I have caused an elaborate search to be made and there is no record of any such incident or any notification to Scotland Yard at all. If there had been any such notification of a stolen car (such as the rumour suggests) a record would have been made of it. There is none. There is therefore not a shred of evidence to support this additional rumour.

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